COMMENTARY

WHY DEMOCRACY IS BETTER

The Three Pillars of Our Civic Heritage

SIDNEY HOOK

TODAY philosophers are being asked to develop a philosophy that will make for peace, safeguard democracy, preserve the classical tradition, reinforce religious belief and practice, diminish the divorce rate, justify free enterprise, or strengthen the United Nations.

This faith in the role of philosophy to solve the world's ills, whether well founded or not, testifies to a belief in the power of ideas even by those who are always talking about the concrete—which someone has called the most deceptive abstraction in our language. It is a faith that should recall philosophy to its perennial mission. For in recent times professional philosophers have not been overmuch concerned with the great questions of value whose critical study constitutes the distinctive subject matter of philosophy in the grand tradition.

Now, the philosopher is distinguished from the mere ideologist in that he is not the hired man of some national or party interest. His primary allegiance is to the truth, hard as it may be to come by and unwelcome though it be when found. He has no special gifts above his fellow men in discovering or discerning values. But his critical training should equip him to see the implication of the values to which we commit ourselves, their alternatives, their relation to our needs, and the kind of evidence that is relevant to making those rational choices without which self-understanding is impossible.

The most fruitful subject matter for philosophical analysis is the value conflicts within our own tradition, and those between our tradition and other traditions. But a successful approach to them requires a degree of knowledge of social, political, and economic *fact* which few philosophers, as I

IN THE present struggle of ideas and ideologies which has created so much confusion among Americans of good will, many have felt the lack of a clear statement of those democratic values which the Western democracies seek to preserve and to offer for the emulation of others. We believe that this article will be recognized as making an important contribution toward fulfilling this need. SIDNEY HOOK has been, for many of our generation, a living example of the active and cultivated intelligence seeking to understand the complicated problems of modern society. Readers of COMMENTARY will recall, as one example out of an unusually productive career, his article "Intelligence and Evil in Human History," published in our March 1947 issue. Professor Hook is chairman of the department of philosophy at New York University. He was born in New York City in 1902 and attended the College of the City of New York and Columbia University. His present article grew out of an address delivered at the Kenyon College International Conference last fall on "The Heritage of the English-Speaking Peoples and Their Responsibility."

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have observed them, show. This explains in part why philosophers avoid such themes, and why when they do not, they say such extraordinary things—like the pronouncement of one American philosopher that the conflict between democracy and communism is essentially a conflict between pre-Kantian British epistemology and post-Kantian German epistemology, and that the future of world peace depends upon teaching the true theory—which happens to be his own—of the relation between perception, sense data, and scientific objects.

IN ANY case, the crisis of our time—of which the crusade against the Western democracies is a part—will continue to challenge us to engage in a process of cultural self-understanding. Above all, we need to explore concretely what it is that is still valid in the philosophical heritage of the English-speaking peoples. We should of course realize that whenever we engage in this kind of appraisal of past history, we are inevitably doing more than describing what that tradition has been or is. We are also, to some extent, prescribing what it should be. Every departure from tradition tends to be justified in terms of something selected from that tradition. William of Ockham insisted he was doing nothing more than returning to Aristotle, Luther to primitive Christianity, and Lenin to Marx. Few would deny that Hamilton and Jefferson are both parts of the American tradition, as are Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, Huey Long, and Roosevelt. In England the divergence is no less evident whether we consider thinkers like Hobbes and Locke, Carlyle and Mill, or political figures like Cobden and Disraeli, Churchill and Morrison.

The history of all peoples shows sharp vicissitudes and great overturns. Their traditions have in part resulted from civil wars, conquests, and revolutions. No one can predict, on the basis of what a tradition is or has been, what its future will be. We are therefore rightly suspicious of anyone who speaks of the tradition of a country as if it gave a final patent of legitimacy. Finding a tradition is like finding an ancestor on a genealogical tree—we pass over the sinners as an alien strain and fix on someone who seems to us exemplary as the fount of our tradition.

In my present endeavor to describe what is most valid in the tradition of the English-speaking peoples, I am quite aware that other things besides those selected here are part of it. But beneath all its diversity, there is, it seems to me, a dominant tendency. As I reflect on the Anglo-American cultural tradition, three facets seem to stand out as of prime significance. These are first, the principle of freely given consent embodied in its institutions. Second, the development of the experimental, empirical attitude —which, were it not for the inevitable misunderstandings that attend the phrase, one would like to call "the pragmatic temper." Third, the recognition of the value of diversity, and the appreciation of the possibility of many different varieties of excellence. All three of these strains are obviously imperfectly realized, but I think it can be established that our culture has developed in these directions, and that they count for more in our culture than in other cultures, say, in the Chinese or Russian.

Today we need particularly to understand these values because they are under heavy attack from other—I will not say, peoples, but governments. And there is a second, equally important reason: though an indigenous part of our tradition, they can under certain favorable conditions be broadened so as to become an integral part of a world culture in which various national cultures may preserve their differences and still unite in coping with problems of common concern.

OF THESE three facets, obviously the most important is the experimental, empirical attitude. It is an attitude which assesses the truth of assertions and claims, both of fact and value, in terms of relevant consequences. It judges profession by performance. It looks upon principles as rules of action. It does not eschew abstractions, for no one can think without abstractions, but relates them

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to what is observed or observable in public experience. It does not denigrate "appearances" in behalf of a "reality" with a higher claim to truth. The appearances, i.e., observable facts, are always part of reality. The empirical attitude recognizes that the real is rational only to the extent that the appearances are, and a reality that makes no difference in the actual experience of our life is a chimera. This attitude is tentative in its judgments but since it makes judgments it is not irresolute. It is initially sceptical of all large claims but since it allows that some are better guides to conduct than others, it is not cynical. It is profane, common-sensical, open-minded about possibilities, but tough-minded about evidence.

This attitude seems to me to represent the dominant philosophic genius of the English-speaking peoples—misunderstood and scorned though it often be from without, and attacked from within. The fanaticisms of political and social creeds emotionally based on *Weltanschauungen* are foreign to it—so foreign that it has difficulty in understanding them, for which it has sometimes paid heavily.

The wisdom of this attitude is most clearly apparent in the fact that it has developed a consensus of agreement on its basic political institutions without an *official* metaphysics or theology. Within the Anglo-American community are to be found groups and individuals who subscribe to mutually incompatible views about the nature of God, the universe, the origin of life, and its destiny. Yet all of them accept the values and the mechanisms of the democratic way of life, even when their respective theoretical justifications are unacceptable to each other.

That this working agreement can be achieved despite the multitudinous presuppositions from which the pattern of democratic living is allegedly derived, suggests two things. First, that logically no metaphysical or theological doctrine entails any specific form of social or political life. I believe it is demonstrable that no single ideology is a necessary condition of democracy. Whatever doctrine you name, individuals and groups can be, and actually have been, good democrats without subscribing to it. Secondly, even in non-democratic countries where official metaphysical or theological views are prescribed—as distinct from false scientific theories—I think it can be established that they do not by themselves logically justify the dictatorial political and social practices which there prevail. Such practices are imposed not because of metaphysical principle but because they further the material interests of whatever power groups are in control.

WHY, then, do Protestants and Catholics, Jews, Gentiles, and Mohammedans, theists and atheists, absolute idealists, solipsists, and materialists—for all their differences—accept the democratic procedures and institutions characteristic of Anglo-American culture? The answer suggested by the fact of working agreement is that when they consciously and rationally do so it is because they reach their political judgments by following the lead of empirical evidence, by observing the consequences of these practices for weal and woe in their own lives and that of the community, by adopting in principle, however inadequately, the same approach by which they attempt to reach reliable conclusions about everyday problems of experience. That they do not often consciously and rationally evaluate political and social affairs is another matter. I am speaking of the way they proceed when they do. We may not agree with their judgments. We may be impatient with their slovenliness or unwillingness in evaluating what the empirical consequences of proposals are, and in determining what is responsible for what. But our argument with the community—if we are socialists or single-taxers, free-money men, New Dealers or anti-New Dealers—does not turn on metaphysical considerations but on empirical fact. Such and such a proposal—we say—will have these determinate observable consequences. No political principle is so sacred as to be safeguarded from overthrow when it leads to unendurable practical consequences. And there is much less difference

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among men as to what is endurable or not endurable, than there is about the first principles of metaphysics or theology.

Man may be conceived as a soul inhabiting a tenement of clay—so long as it is admitted that the activity of the soul is a function of the organization of a social body. Man may be conceived as a machine—so long as it is granted that he is a thinking, feeling machine. He may be conceived as a complex of sense data so long as the order of connection between different complexes of sense data is not reduced to a sense datum itself. He may be conceived as a complex of electrons or a handful of salts in a solution of water so long as he is also recognized as a creature who makes choices. No matter what our view here, the decisive question still remains to be settled: whether these immortal souls or thinking machines or colonies of sense data or electrochemical systems should or should not organize themselves democratically. And the considerations that bear on this question are of an entirely different order from those that incline us to one or another philosophy of man.

THE empirical temper of the Anglo-American tradition is perhaps most focally in evidence in its refusal to be bound by, or even to believe in, *all* the logical implications of its theoretical propositions about social and political life. The meaning of the judgments which guide conduct is not construed from their syntax but from the historical situation in which they function.

It is this basic consideration that makes us particularly attentive to what is *done* in the name of principles rather than to what is said or written, to the public behavior to which they lead rather than to the personal emotional overtones they arouse. What is sometimes referred to as English and American indifference to principle is often not indifference at all but a realization that more than one principle usually applies in any one situation or in the solution of any one problem, and that principles have to be interpreted as operating guides of action. Depending upon the case, now one, now another of the principles receives the greater weight—a process often called bungling or muddling through. If the British people wanted socialism only, in the conventional sense, they could easily get it with a series of neatly planned and ruthlessly executed draconic decrees. If they wanted freedom at any price, they could slip back to the economy of rust and rot of the 30's. Since they want both socialism and freedom, they must make compromises that offend for different reasons doctrinaires in different camps.

By and large our tendency is to judge our politicians not by their party *programs* but by the *things concretely undertaken* in their name. And when we look abroad at the "new democracies" in Russia and Eastern Europe or the "organic democracies" of Spain and Argentina, we naturally, to their great irritation, pay more attention to the character of the lives actually lived by the people subject to their regimes—including the prevalence of police terror, purges, and bloodshed—than to the propagandistic documents and speeches with which their apologists regale us.

To be sure, there are intellectual circles both in England and America who believe that the proper approach to political fact in *other* countries is through ideological analysis. Recently a few American philosophers have proclaimed that there is a family likeness between Anglo-American democracy and Soviet Communism on the ground that the slogans and official documents of Soviet ideology sound very much like our own. What is especially mystifying about this particular piece of political innocence is that these philosophers would rightfully repudiate any claim that because the dictatorships of Spain and Portugal profess to base themselves upon the belief in "the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God" and in "the infinite worth and dignity of the individual soul," this makes them members of the same political family as the Anglo-American democracies, in which the same phrases are also current. Franco is judged by what he does—but Stalin by what he says. And even what Stalin says is carefully picked over to reinforce the impression that he is a

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democrat who merely talks with a Russian accent. When it is pointed out that there is all the difference in the world between what these propagandistic statements formally imply and the tragic facts in the case, the inevitable retort is—"Perhaps so, but we aren't perfect either—there is a discrepancy between *our* ideals and practices, too." That such discrepancies if we disapprove of them can be and have been progressively reduced by the exercise of our rights of criticism and opposition under our functioning Bill of Rights—which is conspicuously not true in Soviet Russia, where absolutely no opposition is permitted—is dismissed as a trivial consideration. However, to my mind, this is the essence of the matter.

The situation of the Negro is certainly bad in the United States; but it has improved since his emancipation; and, most important of all, the procedures by which his status can be bettered remain intact, and are being progressively strengthened. The same cannot be said of the situation of the inmates of the Soviet slave-labor camps.

To claim that the Atlantic democracies and Soviet Russia are both democratic, differing only in degree, is to debauch our language unless, when we hear such statements, we remind ourselves that the difference between life and death is also in a sense a matter of degree. When official apologists of the Russian regime talk this way it is noteworthy that they forget one of their favorite Hegelian dicta—a difference in degree may make a difference in kind. If we do not teach the empirical temper of mind we run the danger of debasing our whole intellectual currency, of so confusing rational discourse about freedom of the press, economic democracy, national self-determination, free and unfettered elections, that nothing will appear clear but the logic of the iron fist.

THE institutionalization of freely given consent is the second facet in the culture of the English-speaking peoples. Critics both within and without our culture—with the exception of lineal descendants of Plato and Thrasymachus—never question the validity of the ideal of freely given consent, but they do dispute the extent to which it pervades our institutions.

We may ask, however, since our task is to examine our uncriticized assumptions: Why is freely given consent better than coercion? Here, too, the justification for freely given consent in human relationships rests ultimately upon the satisfactions of human experience. Where rules, laws, and plans rest upon freely given consent there is less friction, less fear, and more abundant opportunities for a more abundant life for more people. It is not necessary to labor the point. In almost every area of human relationships where decisions affecting others must be taken, their participation and the freely given consent which arises from it both increase the benefits achieved and enhance the quality of the achievements.

It is obvious that freely given consent is no guarantee that just or wise decisions will be made. But so long as that consent can be granted, withheld, or periodically renewed, it makes it more likely that the consequences of our policies for the persons affected by them will be kept in mind. That is why it is better to accept a foolish decision of a democratic community, provided we are able to agitate against it, than to ram our dose of wisdom, about which we may be wrong anyhow, down its throat. For all the risks we run in accepting decisions that rest, directly or indirectly, upon freely given consent, they are far less than the risks involved in their only alternatives—anarchy and despotism.

The acceptance of the principle of freely given consent as a binding rule of social life entails certain beliefs about the *empirical* nature of man. The two most important are: first, that men are responsible, and second, they are sufficiently rational to know when and where the shoe pinches and when and where not. No sane person would advocate democracy in an insane asylum or in an institution for the feeble-minded.

Are these empirical beliefs true? I believe they are. But because the evidence is difficult to assess, a certain element of faith—of reasonable faith since it is not arbitrary—

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enters into our allegiance to the ways of democracy.

The best way to test this faith, if the historical evidence seems uncertain, is to establish the conditions under which freely given consent may be said to be achieved. What are these conditions? When is consent free—when not? It is not enough that I have a choice. The man who pokes a pistol in my ribs and says: "Your money or your life" may argue that I have a choice but he cannot decently claim that it is free. The presence of physical constraint, the threat of concentration camps for dissenters and their families that attends elections and plebiscites in all totalitarian countries, makes a grotesque mockery of the claims of such governments to be based on consent.

Coercion, of course, may take other than physical forms. There are few things a starving man will not consent to. Economic concentration of power may compel an assent that would not be given under conditions of economic justice. Even in the absence of physical and economic coercion, consent is not free if it is bound or blinded by ignorance. I am not speaking now of our inevitable ignorance, of the absence of knowledge because there is no knowledge, which is part of the human estate. Such coercion is an aspect of the coercion of the natural scene. It can be mitigated but never entirely removed. I am speaking of the ignorance of what *is* known, of the ignorance of other points of view and policies and the reasons therefor, which is engendered when all sources of information and inquiry are controlled by the state.

These considerations are elementary but decisive. From them we can derive justification for the freedoms of the Bill of Rights —which constitute political democracy; of economic democracy; and, above all, because it is an infallible index of the presence of others—the right of opposition.

The acceptance of the principle of consent does *not* imply that the individuals from whom consent is derived are isolated, separate, unrelated centers of interest whose existence is prior to the social order or state presumed to arise out of contract or agreement among them. The social relationships into which all human beings are born are as essential to their nature as their biological endowments. The individual personality is a cultural achievement not a precondition of culture. But from this it does not follow that we can draw an equation between the individual and the social, and legitimately speak of the social good or public welfare as if it were more than the good and welfare of you, of me, and our neighbors. The origin of social and political institutions is logically and morally irrelevant to their present function. And in evaluating this function individuals are primary and their judgment, imperfect as it is, must be regarded as supreme. Whoever denies this speaks only as an individual for other individual interests, no matter whether he speaks in the name of the general will, the state, the nation, class, or party.

The state as an instrument has positive functions to perform, and not merely the negative ones of preserving domestic order, if it is to serve human interests adequately. But insofar as it rests upon consent, the state recognizes individual persons as morally prior to it, and collectively just as much its masters as they are of any other instrumentality of their will. This it seems to me represents the abiding insight of John Locke, who had more to do with formulating the principles that express the political traditions of Anglo-American culture than any other thinker. No strictures by his current detractors affect his wisdom on this point.

There is, however, the difficult problem of minority rights and majority rule in governments that profess to be based on freely given consent. Minorities can be and have been oppressed by majorities as well as by despots. The traditional doctrine, according to which all human beings possess absolute and inalienable rights that can never be abridged by any agency of government, is more coherent as an emotion than as a doctrine. Its meaning is ambiguous and, when not ambiguous, false. It is a very uncertain

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guide to action. For in most political situations a claim to one alleged absolute right conflicts with a claim to another alleged absolute right. No method is indicated as to how we can measure degrees of absoluteness or establish the priority of absolutes in relation to each other. More important, it is doubtful whether anyone really believes in absolute rights that are unqualifiedly valid no matter what their consequences. Every right in the Bill of Rights is subject to qualification and abridgment if its practice results in widespread misery and danger.

Sometimes it is argued that because democracies cannot guarantee absolute rights in all circumstances and because totalitarian governments do not recognize them at all, there is in principle no difference between them. This overlooks an all-important distinction. In a democracy, the abridgment of the Bill of Rights, whether for good or bad, is a crisis phenomenon of limited duration. It depends upon the processes of consent, if not for its initiation, then for its continuation. In a dictatorship the abridgment of the Bill of Rights is systematic, rather than episodic, and depends upon the arbitrary decree of a small minority. Thus the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, which according to Stalin is "substantially the dictatorship of the Communist party," is supposed to be transitional. But who determines when the transition is over—the Russian people or their rulers?

Democracy rests on the possibility of compromise or integration of conflicting interests. In order to avoid the greater evil of civil war, we yield to the lesser evil of enduring an unjust majority decision in the hope that continued political education will lead to a reversal of majority judgment. In a dictatorship the only appeal from Philip drunk is to Philip sober. In a democracy the appeal from an unenlightened majority is to an enlightened one. Justice Felix Frankfurter has put this admirably in one of his decisions: "Where all the effective means of inducing political changes are left free from interference, education in the abandonment of foolish legislation is itself a training in liberty." The English-speaking peoples have learned this at a great cost but they have learned it and it is now part of their tradition, despite the lapses of some government agencies.

No democracy can long survive in which majority decisions are consistently foolish or aimed to destroy minorities as well as to defeat them. A majority is made up of individuals whose differences with each other are not canceled out by their unity on certain questions. In virtue of these differences some members of the majority may find themselves in a minority on other questions. The precedents established by unjust majority decisions may ultimately affect majority as well as minority members.

The causes of injustice are many. Among them, one of the most insidious is insensitiveness and unimaginativeness toward the experiences of others. We may conclude from this that the survival of democracy depends not only upon a faith in human educability, not only on commitment to continuous programs of public education for its citizens, but also on the development of an attitude that appreciates and encourages differences instead of merely tolerating them. This brings us to the third and final facet of the heritage of the English-speaking world.

THAT diversity of experience, direct or vicarious, is immediately enjoyable, few in our culture will be inclined to deny. It safeguards us against provincialism and the tyranny of the familiar, whose hold may sometimes be so strong as to incapacitate us from making new responses necessary for survival. Diversity in modes of experience refreshes the human spirit. Every discovery is a triumph of variation over repetition.

Natural as is joy in diversity, so is fear and dislike of diversity—and we know enough about ourselves to realize that these emotions can both be experienced together. There are plausible reasons for believing that our fears prove most stubborn in the presence of differences that we suspect threaten our existence, our uniqueness, our *conatus sui*

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persevare. Most often these suspicions are false. Most differences are compatible with each other, not exclusive of each other. Growth in maturity consists largely in learning to appreciate differences, in learning to understand them when we cannot appreciate them, and at the very least, in learning to live with them when we cannot understand them. Whenever we are challenged by the presence of differences, the task of intelligence is to find a way by which those differences that can enrich our life may be distinguished from those that would destroy it.

In the field of culture and politics, the traditions and present tendencies of the English-speaking countries, despite some grave shortcomings in respect to racial differences, come closer to achieving a reasonable, practical solution of the problem of cultural unity and difference than any other widely dominant tradition. (When I say closer I do not mean to deny that there is a considerable distance to go.) We have heard a good deal in recent years about the necessity of a basically unified culture to produce that community of taste, judgment, and ideals without which, so it is asserted, social life is in a state of potential civil war. Most of the discussion has been a priori and in disregard of patent fact. That a common religion or language or origin is not a sufficient condition for peace is evidenced by the Spanish Civil War—and our own Civil War, which occurred at a time when the states of the Union were in many respects much more homogeneous culturally than they are today. That it is not a necessary condition is revealed by the history of Switzerland, Canada, and the greater part of American history itself.

Whatever cultural differences exist in the community and whatever our feeling towards them, they do not constitute a threat to a common life in society unless these differences are accompanied by *practices* that deny the right of differences to others. A stable pluralistic community is born from the moment it is recognized that all differences are equal which accept a *common method* of negotiating differences. It seems to me that it is this emphasis upon *method* as more important than any specific result, as a way of insuring progress without anarchy, that underlies all three facets of our heritage—the empirical temper, the democratic attitude, and our cultural pluralism.

Silone, the Italian novelist, has recently proclaimed that men must agree on a certain number of fundamental questions—what is good or evil, true or false—in order not to massacre each other. I believe it is more accurate to say that they must agree on a basic method of reaching the truth or testing the good rather than upon any particular truth or good. For so long as they agree on this method, all other differences about specific truths or goods are in principle resolvable.

There is an exact analogue to this in our political life. No matter what our political faith or beliefs may be in a democracy, so long as we sincerely accept the basic rules of the game, so long as we are willing to abide by the consequences of the free give-and-take of critical debate, we may legitimately hold and practice any notion or doctrine we please. Our differences may reveal valuable insights and truths we have missed, and would continue to miss if no one were permitted to play under the rules unless he accepted our version of the true and desirable to begin with.

The same analogue holds for the even vaster region of cultural differences. We permit—or should permit—each group to preserve and develop its own cultural ways, provided it does not attempt to impose its specific pattern upon others, provided it leaves its individual members free to choose among the competing diversities of tradition.

It should be obvious that cultural or ethnic democracy is no more possible without political democracy than is economic democracy. This has been denied by those who point to Soviet Russia as a model of cultural and ethnic democracy. The principles and practice of Soviet Russia decree that "culture must be socialist in content and national in form." But the only national

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differences that are recognized are primarily those of language. The separation of content from form is a myth. No opportunities for the free development of the culture of the constituent republics exists, precisely because what is called the socialist *content* of their culture, from art and music to astronomy and zoology, is prescribed for them by the Kremlin. Without the right to develop responses that are critical or even hostile to the reigning cultural dogmas—and this involves the freedom of the press together with other political freedoms—ethnic democracy is another deceptive phrase.

THE upshot of all this is that to live prosperously and peacefully together what is required is not a fixed common doctrine or a fixed body of truths but a common method or set of rules under which we can live with our differences, mitigate, integrate, transcend them if we wish, or let them alone if *that* is our wish. We cannot make absolutes of doctrines, tastes, or principles without inviting fanaticism.

Nonetheless, there must be one working absolute on which there can be no compromise, about which we must be fanatical —and this absolute is the rules of the game under which we settle differences. Whoever plays outside the rules, whoever tries to write his own rules, has given a clear declaration in advance that he proposes to interpret differences as *ipso facto* evidence of hostility. He has in effect declared war which can be avoided only if we knuckle under to any arbitrary demand. There is no inconsistency whatsoever in being intolerant of those who show active intolerance. In fact, tolerance of the actively intolerant is not only as intellectually stultifying but is practical complicity in the crime of intolerance. Those who refuse to play under the rules should do so knowing they risk losing their possibilities of appeal to the benefits and protection of the rules.

The method of the empirical temper, of democratic process, of cultural pluralism is open-minded but not tender-minded. It is a perpetual invitation in the face of differences to sit down and reason together, to consider the evidence, explore alternative proposals, to assess the consequences, and to let the decision rest—when matters of human concern are at stake—with the consent of those affected by the proposals.

This method does not guarantee results. Not even the result of agreement. Values are relative to human interests and, although objective, may genuinely conflict. The conflict *may* be so deep that resolution is impossible *even* if we agree to negotiate. The assumption that in any particular case agreement on conflicting interests and values can be won rests upon the faith (or willingness to risk the assumption) that men are sufficiently alike to work out ways of becoming *more* alike, or sufficiently alike to agree about the permissible limits of being different.

WHAT I have selected from the tradition of the English-speaking peoples was not always indigenous; it has become so. It may also become indigenous to the traditions of other peoples and cultures. It was on its way to becoming the settled tradition of Western Europe until the First World War —the result of capitalistic imperialism—prepared the ground for Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin, and Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco. If it can be combined with the welfare economy of democratic socialism, it may establish itself elsewhere, not only in Europe but in the East. We undoubtedly have much to learn from Indian and Chinese wisdom, but the Sikhs, Moslems, and Hindus can also learn a little from us about religious freedom and toleration, and the Chinese about representative government.

It is a way of life that outside its own territories challenges no other way of life except in self-defence. Unfortunately, its existence has been threatened all along the line, first by Hitlerism and now by Soviet Communism. Whoever believed that Nazi expansionism constituted a threat to the survival of democratic institutions must conclude by the same logic and the same type of evidence that Soviet Communism repre-

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sents today an even greater threat to our survival, because the potential opposition to totalitarianism is now much weaker in consequence of the war, and because the Soviet government commands a fifth column in democratic countries stronger than anything Hitler or Franco ever imagined possible.

How is this formidable crusade against what is permanently valid in the tradition of the English-speaking peoples to be met? Necessary as it is to build a decent social order and remedy injustices in our own countries to prevent totalitarianism from spreading for internal reasons, this would no more be sufficient to stop Stalin than social reforms in England and France were sufficient to stop Hitler.

The general problem is to conduct our foreign and domestic affairs so that more and more peoples of the world *voluntarily* associate themselves in a world union in which, on the basis of primary allegiance to democratic processes, the widest development of cultural diversity is encouraged. On the road to this, certain perspectives can be indicated as a guide to more immediate issues.

First, however indissoluble the complex of economic and political factors may be today, it is important to distinguish between them and to realize that the core of the present crisis is in the political realm. The NAM and doctrinaire Marxists to the contrary notwithstanding, the fundamental conflict today is not between free enterprise and collectivism but between political democracy and totalitarianism. Rudolf Hilferding, whose Marxist schooling did not blind him to the deliverances of historical experience, recognized a few years ago that it had become impossible to explain political events plausibly in terms of economic changes. On the contrary, it is becoming clearer and clearer that the very existence of an expanding totalitarian power necessitates the transformation of the domestic and international economy of the still remaining democratic countries in behalf of political goals. This requires that we be open-eyed and open-minded about this necessary process, and seek to strengthen democratic forces by economic measures rather than give economic forces their head irrespective of their political consequences. No genuine democrat will lump together, as do both Senator Ball and John Dos Passos, the mixed socialist economy of Great Britain and the totally regimented one of the Soviet Union.

Secondly, every effort should be made to avoid a shooting war with the Soviet Union. The initiative in such a war can never come from the United States because of the limitations on the executive power. But under a totalitarian regime, it requires, as we have seen, only the word of the leader to send armies over the border and give the command for a Pearl Harbor. Prepared for such an eventuality, the United States before the eyes of the entire world should propose the termination of the "cold war" with Russia on the basis of the following conditions: the dissolution of the Soviet Union's fifth column in all countries; the revision of the UN Charter and the abolition of the veto; the acceptance of the Baruch-Lilienthal plan for the international control of atomic energy.

Thirdly, an educational, not ideological, campaign should be organized throughout the world on the relative merits and achievements of democracy and totalitarianism. This cannot be accomplished by governmental agencies because they are naturally suspect: with the extraordinary exception of the President's Civil Rights Committee they are inclined to be less than frank about our own deficiencies, which must be presented as part of the picture. This campaign should be undertaken abroad primarily by American and English private organizations and professional associations. It can function independently of the vagaries of economy-minded politicians. And, most important of all, a personnel can be recruited from among those educators and publicists who consider themselves not only as Englishmen and Americans but as members of an international community.

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PARTITION IN WASHINGTON: AN INQUIRY

The Factors Guiding Our Government's Policy

HAL LEHRMAN

CONFLICT over Kashmir filled the Security Council's agenda in the second week of February, but the corridors buzzed with Palestine. Upstairs, in a remote wing of the made-over Sperry plant at Lake Success, the "five lonely pilgrims" of the Palestine Commission were writing and rewriting the case for an international police to halt the rampaging Arabs —and wondering if their labors would achieve much beyond literary exercise. For added private confusion their chairman, Karel Lisicky of Czechoslovakia, was turning red and pink over Cairo reports that the Arab League aimed to buy more anti-partition arms from—of all places—Czechoslovakia. James Reston of the *New York Times* was floating an authoritative trial balloon for a bi-partisan policy that would take Zionism out of American politics, and Joseph Alsop of the *Herald Tribune* was calling down maledictions on the President for having succumbed to pro-partition pressure without thought of the awful consequences.

A harassed Mr. Truman was now, according to alternate "well-informed" rumor, telling Democratic Boss Ed Flynn that the United States would back partition all the way and telling an unidentified but distinguished pro-Zionist visitor that bad advice in favor of partition had put the President of the United States in a most disastrous personal position. Nobody knew for certain whether Palestine policy, supposed to be made in the White House, would continue to be made there, or where to go in search of it.

Stepping gingerly around reporters' traps for a clue to American intentions, Secretary of State Marshall was nervously assuring his press conference that the United States had supported, and would go on supporting, the "procedure" of the United Nations—whatever that meant. Defense Secretary Forrestal was denying any campaign to withdraw this country's endorsement from partition, but continued to spread calamitous warnings around the Hill that this country remained mortally dependent on Middle Eastern oil. Senators and Congressmen were preferring not to think about the prospect of having to legislate American soldiers into troopships bound for Palestine. In his rooms at the new House Office Building, New York's Sol Bloom was debating whether to frame or burn the telegram from the President of Liberia promising him that Liberia's delegate to the General Assembly was going to vote "yes" on partition. And in the inner sanctum of the State Department's Near Eastern Affairs division, a top executive of

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DURING the war and after, HAL LEHRMAN's dispatches from many capitals of the world earned him his reputation as one of this country's most informed and reliable political correspondents. When the continued uncertainty as to our government's attitude to the implementation of the Palestine partition plan made this perhaps the top news story of today, we asked Mr. Lehrman to go to first-hand sources in Washington, as well as in Lake Success and New York, and gather and set down what seemed to him the chief factors in the minds of our nation's policy-makers as they struggled toward some decision. HAL LEHRMAN has written about the Near East and Palestine for COMMENTARY as well as about Greece, Hungary, and Rumania. His recent book, *Russia's Europe* (Appleton-Century), analyzes the political forces and economic factors that are shaping the postwar destinies of the Soviet-dominated countries of Europe. Mr. Lehrman has written for the *New York Herald Tribune, Nation, PM, Redbook,* and other American and British periodicals. He was born in New York in 1911 and attended Cornell University.

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Aramco (Arabian-American Oil Company), newly returned from an inspection tour, was reporting in detail on desert storms in Araby.

It was in that mid-February week of befuddlement that this writer went down to Washington to find out what he could about basic American interests in the Middle East, including and extending beyond the patch of ground called Palestine.

By the time these findings appear in print, we should presumably have less reason to peer into a crystal ball for the official American attitude toward implementation of partition. American activity—or inactivity—in the Security Council would by then have indicated how far Washington was prepared to satisfy the Palestine Commission's demand for tools to do the job assigned by the General Assembly's recommendation of sovereign Jewish and Arab states. Therefore, I spent no time trying to beguile my sources into unveiling the immediate future. Instead, I looked for the *long-range view*—for the *fundamental* American purposes in the Middle East, for a bed-rock definition of our national interests by which this country's day-to-day moves at Lake Success might be clarified and explained.

What follows below is constructed from the off-the-record opinions of key officials, civil and military, the educated guesses of correspondents, the private thoughts of oil men, the opinions of Zionists, pro-Zionists, non-Zionists, and anti-Zionists, and the "scuttlebutt" all around in the Washington air. In exchange for the guarantee of anonymity, responsible men spoke perhaps more freely than is their custom. I am aware that some may have spoken with less than earnest objectivity.

If so, their assertions, as I report them here, will be correspondingly vulnerable to the critical reader. On the whole, I think the following represents fairly the views of those professional quarters in Washington primarily concerned with the Palestine issue not as domestic politics but as part of an American policy for the Middle East and the world—a policy which in their opinion may require placing discretion above valor.

WHAT *are the United States' strategic interests in the Middle East? Are any of these interests involved in the Palestine dispute?*

Strategically (according to my informants) we have a crucial need for the area as a potential base for military operations and as a fuel reservoir. Therefore we need to retain Arab friendship for ourselves (and for our British ally), and keep the Russians out.

All these requirements may be adversely affected by the Palestine dispute.

It is axiomatic that military planning rejects sentiment. General staffs cannot make room on their charts for intangibles like justice, morality, or loyalty to previous commitments. Only the strategic implications of the Palestine question count (so runs the argument).

If war breaks out in the foreseeable future, it will be fought over greater bombing distances than before. We shall be able to operate farther away from the target. The Middle East is one vast landing field. It is also an essential supply, troop, and naval depot for decisive action against the Eurasian land mass.

The United States consumes more oil than the rest of the globe combined. To date we have produced about 64 per cent of the world's output. This has drained our reserves severely. Our ultimate resources are estimated at only 17 per cent of world potential. But the Arabian fields alone have at least 30 per cent, and probably much more.

This wealth is available for Anglo-American use to the extent that engineering skill can reach it. By the end of 1948, two pipelines already in operation and one now being built will be pumping better than a quarter-million barrels of crude oil from Kirkuk to the Mediterranean each day. By 1952 this output will be reinforced—if there are no political obstructions—by a Trans-Arabian pipeline (TAPline) from Abqaiq, a Middle East pipeline from Kuwait and Abadan, plus several lines still in the paper stage, making a grand total of close to two

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million barrels delivered daily to the Levantine coast.

Should this network of pipelines, for any reason whatever, fail to function or even to come into existence, the oil would have to go painfully by tanker down the Persian Gulf, around the Arabian Peninsula, and up the Red Sea—a round-trip distance nearly seven times as long as the pipeline route and immeasurably slower.

The pipelines will be the indispensable lifeline for American industrial and mobile strength in war. They are also vital in peace to the effective operation of the European Recovery Program, henceforth a basic element in United States foreign policy.

Western Europe's oil requirements can be met from Western Hemisphere exports only by decreasing our own military potential. If the giant Arabian resources are safely harnessed, Near Eastern oil alone can supply Europe's needs—and the oil now crossing the Atlantic from Venezuela and Colombia can be diverted to the United States.

Thus, from the purely military point of view, anything which might impede the flow of oil—such as Arab animosity or any turbulence spreading out from Palestine—is dangerous to our national interests.

It would be especially unfortunate for the Palestine trouble to come to a head at a time when we are involved in helping the European democracies struggle for survival. Not only the Marshall Plan but the Truman Doctrine would be jeopardized. Give the Russians an excuse to lay down supply routes in a new area, and they spread themselves over the map. (Note the heavy concentrations in Rumania and Hungary for the ostensible guarding of supply routes to Austria.) A Soviet contingent in Palestine would offer the Kremlin's strategists a fine opportunity to build up new and heavily guarded "supply-lines." They might even expect to be allowed garrisons in Greece and Turkey. The one safe way to avoid such distressing eventualities is to rule out the presence of Russians in Palestine altogether.

But, military circles admit, the end of the mandate terminates British military control of Palestine and creates a "power vacuum" which must somehow be filled. Who is to fill it is a conundrum for State Department and White House to solve. When diplomatic enigmas are on the table, the generals retire.

WHAT are the United States' political interests in the Middle East? How can these interests be best advanced in the Palestine dispute?

Our political interests (the thesis continues) are to maintain our strategic interests and our position of leadership in the economic and cultural development of the Arab world. These interests can best be advanced by bolstering British prestige among the Arabs so far as is consonant with our own aims, cementing Arab friendship for ourselves, and preserving peace in the Middle East by finding a Palestine solution equally acceptable to Jews and Arabs.

Peace in the Middle East is a prime necessity of American policy. Not merely peace between the peoples of Palestine, but also peace between Palestine and its neighbors, and peace among the Big Powers. On all these counts, it is contended, partition injures the American interest. Partition has already split Arab and Jew in Palestine; it has inflamed the Arab states; it threatens to bring in the Red Army.

No peace is possible in the Middle East when a Palestine "solution" satisfies only one side. A golden chance for peace was lost when the recommendations of the Anglo-American Inquiry were rejected in 1946. This commission had urged, along with 100,000 immigration certificates for Palestine, a search under the mandate and a UN trusteeship for a settlement which would grant the fullest measure of self-government without making either the Arabs or Jews dominant and without restricting the liberties of any group. The British would have been happy to accept this, because they were tired of American back-seat driving and would have agreed to any

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arrangement by which we gave them moral support and shared the responsibility. The State Department recommended the plan to the White House. But the Zionists persuaded President Truman to come out *only* for the 100,000 certificates. The plan was killed.

Then came the Grady-Morrison project. This also was on the right track, Washington circles contend, because it correctly calculated that independence in Palestine could be achieved only through gradualism: begin with limited autonomy under federalism, get the Jews and Arabs used to working together, and let them move step by step toward separate statehood if they still desire it. But the Jewish Agency, under pressure from its extremists, vetoed this too. The weary British then left the whole problem on the UN's doorstep.

The State Department had long foreseen that the Arabs would violently resist partition. The Department had clearly said so. For its pains, the Department was branded as anti-Jewish in Zionist propaganda. Its advice was outweighed by pro-partition planks in the Democratic and Republican platforms and by pro-partition resolutions in Congress. After having refused, because of Zionist insistence, to share the responsibility for plans which might have worked, the United States, again because of Zionist pressure, finally committed itself in the UN to partition—the one plan which had no hope of succeeding at all.

Partition has set off an extreme Arab reaction. Moderate Arab leaders, pro-American in education and outlook, are in danger of being swept away if they seek to restrain the passionate anti-partition feelings of their peoples. The power of the rabid nationalists has lately been demonstrated afresh in Iraq, where they were able to overthrow an entrenched government for signing the best treaty Iraq had ever been offered by the British. Even the absolute monarch Ibn Saud, who has succeeded hitherto in distinguishing between oil and politics, is not so absolute that he will be able forever to ignore his councillors and his people.

If an international force goes into Palestine, the Arab states are likely to denounce it—and fight it—as a violation of the Charter. This means war. If UN troops do not enter, and the Palestine Arabs are worsted by the Jews, the Arab states will go to the rescue anyway, and we will then have to intervene, which again means war. Or, if the Arab states refrain and the Palestinian Arabs alone overcome the Jews, we will also have to intervene, because it would be unthinkable to permit the massacre of the Jews. In any case, therefore, partition confronts us with the imperative of armed force—a disaster for the American policy of peace in the Middle East.

But isn't the UN also a vital interest of the United States? And haven't British obstructions and American non-support (such as our arms embargo) hamstrung partition?

The United States certainly has a vital interest in the UN. But both Britain and the United States, I was told, have acted in a manner consistent with their obligations as Middle East powers and as members of the UN.

The British clearly warned the General Assembly, before partition, that they could not cooperate in enforcing any settlement unless they considered it fair and unless it was accepted by Jews *and* Arabs. The British abstained from voting. They did not consider partition fair, and the Arabs did not accept it. Therefore the policy of the British since partition has been to maintain as much order as possible without implementing a decision they do not approve, and to prepare their own ultimate withdrawal with a minimum of damage to their relations with the Arabs.

That is why, according to my informants, the British declined to surrender the mandate piecemeal. A free port for the Jews would have reduced British jurisdiction and increased Arab-Jewish clashes. Legal arming of Haganah would have divided the police authority and openly favored the Jews. Premature arrival of the Palestine

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Commission would have set off an Arab uprising, complicated the British security problem, and further alienated the Arabs.

Britain's sale of arms to the Arab states stemmed from prior treaty commitments, not from a desire to frustrate the UN. On the other hand, it is contended, Britain has loyally endeavored to block smuggling of Arab arms into Palestine, has repulsed Arab raiders, and has repressed internal disorders from whatever source. If the British have failed to tranquillize Palestine, it is because the Arab reaction to partition—as they predicted and we should have known—was uncontrollable by any means short of war.

As for the United States, we had agreed previously to ship arms for equipping the constabularies of certain Arab states. Our embargo actually cut these shipments off. Its intention was not to leave the Jews defenseless but simply to curtail the supply of arms available for violence.

Palestine could not have been exempted from the embargo zone. This would have directly flouted the Arabs, whom it is not in our national interest to flout. Nor could we refuse to sell arms to Arabs outside Palestine and connive with the Jews to frustrate the *British* embargo inside Palestine.

Right or wrong, Britain was the mandatory power, responsible for the maintenance of order. Unless we were prepared to go in and take over that responsibility, we had to allow Britain to keep the peace in her own way, embargo and all.

Similarly, it would have been grossly improper for us to dictate to the UN. Washington has been criticized for failing to set a fast pace in implementing partition. But there was nothing we could legitimately do until the Palestine Commission, as authorized by the Assembly, had begun its work and made its report. What about the Charter, which gives the UN only narrowly limited powers and sets precise restrictions on what its components may and may not do? Should we have imposed our own views in advance? Is the UN to be merely a puppet of American policy, or is it to have a policy of its own, as a union of free and equal members?*

WHAT, then, should be the United States' attitude toward partition, in the light of our strategic and political interests in the Middle East?

As a good member of the UN, we should accept any decision emerging from the Security Council or any other competent body. But our efforts to shape that decision should concentrate on a formula which will contribute to pacification in the Middle East by being acceptable to both sides in Palestine.

It is highly unlikely that an international force containing American and Soviet contingents would contribute anything to peace in the Middle East. Such divided forces would perform at least as badly together as the occupation armies in Austria and Germany. Would each power patrol a separate area in Jewish Palestine? Then a Solomon would be needed to obtain uniformity of treatment for each area. Would the contingents be fused into a single organization? Then the operation would be submerged in a welter of procedural details, language troubles, and varying "neutralities." We found in Vienna that it was a triumph to get just four MP's of different nationality to work amicably in one international police jeep. And three years of close experience with Russian occupations in Europe tell us it will be much easier

* The statement of February 24 by Warren R. Austin, American delegate to the Security Council, seemed to follow closely this line of thought, placing strong emphasis on the legalities involved. He proposed that the five permanent members of the Council study the Palestine situation with regard to "possible threats to the international peace." Should such threats be discovered, and should the Security Council "decide that it is necessary to use armed force to maintain international peace in connection with Palestine," then the United States is prepared to "consult under the Charter with a view to such action as may be necessary to maintain international peace." Austin emphasized at the same time that the Charter did not provide for the enforcement of any political settlement, and that the Council could aim only at keeping the international peace and not at enforcing partition.—ED.

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to get Soviet troops into Palestine than out. They would certainly not want the situation to improve enough to justify their departure. So, my informants feared, there they would sit, at the end of the pipelines, stirring up trouble, playing one side off against another, never letting go.

Moreover, the President has no clear authority to attach an American contingent to such an international force in Palestine. The UN Participation Act passed by Congress in 1945 empowered him only to "negotiate" with the Security Council for an all-purpose international security force. No such force exists. The President would have to go to Congress for clearance of a special force for Palestine. Congress would probably refuse. At best, it would never act quickly enough to enable the force to reach Palestine in time to prevent the large-scale attack the Arabs are planning when the British leave on May 15.

These Congressional inhibitions would not apply to a volunteer force. But how would these volunteers be selected under the UN to keep out Soviet elements? And how could they be equipped, trained, and transported before May 15?

It has been suggested that a force be made up entirely of the smaller UN members, omitting both the United States and Russia. A possible compromise, worth trying—I was told—if there is no other way out of partition. But the smaller states might well say: "Why ask us to do a job which, under the Charter, the big powers are required to do?" And would the Arabs show much respect for lilliputs when they seem ready to challenge giants?

The fatal flaw in *any* brand of security force is that it is an attempt to impose a settlement from without when obviously no alien settlement can stick unless both sides within are agreed. This, in fact, has been the error of all efforts thus far to find a solution. Why not, it is suggested, try a different line now? Instead of trying to settle the argument by outsiders, why not let Arabs and Jews try to agree among themselves?

Admittedly, present tempers are too high for conciliation, because of the hatreds evoked by the partition plan. So let there be a cooling-off period. Let there be a moratorium on partition. Let the UN establish a trusteeship to govern the whole of Palestine during the interim. Let the trusteeship be implemented by an international force which would replace the British merely to keep order until the more moderate Arabs and Jews worked out their own salvation.

Such an international force would not be resisted by the Arabs, because it would be entirely divorced from partition. And such a force would not be embarrassed by a Soviet contingent. The trusteeship would be held by the "Allied and Associated Powers" to whom the Ottoman Middle East fell after World War I. Today this means the United States, Britain, and France—but not Russia. While the Security Council marked time, the British—as holders of the mandate from the UN's predecessor, the League—could draft a proposal for the Trusteeship Council. True, the Soviet Union holds a seat on this Trusteeship Council. But decisions there go by simple majority—and the veto does not operate. . . .

I DO not wish to place undue emphasis on this trusteeship idea—which many would regard as merely a stratagem to get the United States out of a tight hole and gain time. By now, or before this article will have run its span for the month of March, Lake Success may have elaborated an altogether different device. I cite the trusteeship project here only to show the beginnings of a scheme in the minds of men confronted with a first-class dilemma in foreign policy and searching unhappily for some avenue of escape—if the President and Secretary Marshall would let them take it.

It will have been noted that the concept of national interests as sketched above has been set down with austere objectivity, in order to report a specific point of view accurately. One can anticipate that this concept will be regarded by the Jewish

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Agency (and by others, including many non-Zionists) as assailable along all flanks, even on its own terms of priority consideration for the national welfare of the United States. For example, it could be resonantly argued:

That appeasement of the Arabs cannot advance our national interests, since the Arabs—like Hitler and Stalin—are not appeasable;

That the United States, holding all the keys to power in the Middle East, does not need to appease the Arabs;

That unappeased Jewish extremists in Palestine are much more dangerous to our national interests than unappeased Arabs;

And that the United States and the UN alike will suffer irretrievable moral loss unless this government halts its Arab apologetics and takes the lead in resolute fulfillment of a partition agreement to which both the United States and the UN are deeply committed.

Washington's pro-Arab school, it might be said, is copying the dismal "Arab Treaty" policy of the Foreign Office. The British for generations have been signing pacts and pouring money and benefits into the Arab territories with the understanding that the Arabs thus favored would stand by Britain in time of need. Well, when the need came, the Iranians and the Iraqi paid off by revolting squarely in Britain's face. In 1942 I was in Cairo when Rommel camped some miles away outside Alexandria—and Britain's loyal Egyptians were exhibiting plain delight at the promise of a new overlord. I was again in Cairo in 1945 watching the British, wise as the Bourbons, happily suckle the Arab League—and today (as Jon Kimche suggests elsewhere in this magazine) the British are already regretting they did not smother the baby instead. One need only remember the Mufti of Jerusalem to conclude that the Arabs save their credit for the strong, not for the sentimental. If the United States backs away from partition, this country might gain a temporary flurry of gratitude but a permanent loss of face.

We need the oil, but Islam needs the dollars. Half of Iraq's revenue flows from oil; Egypt's treasury is bolstered by royalties from 40,000 barrels daily; Saudi Arabia would be given back to the nomads if American cash ceased paying better than ninety per cent of the desert kingdom's budget. Main hope of Syria and the Lebanon for escape from bankruptcy is the millions of dollars' worth of Levantine pounds which Aramco will buy annually to pay for TAPline's right-of-way, policing, local personnel, and supplies. Anti-partitionist Arabs taking vengeance on the pipelines would first have to dodge the vengeance of the Arab potentates themselves.

THERE is already considerable evidence, it is pointed out, that the enforcement of partition will involve little risk of stirring Arab hearts deeply enough to touch their purses. In Egypt even now the native press is futilely belaboring the government's failure to punish the "Western capitalists" for the crime of partition. Not one piaster and not one soldier has gone from Ibn Saud's realm to help the "Arab People's Army." When his workers planned a sympathy strike for their Palestine brethren, the old fox forbade it, advising them instead to donate the wages they would save by not striking. (There were no donations.) Despite the fulminations in Beirut and Damascus, plus a bit of arson and some breakage of American windows, oil men are confident that ratification of the TAPline treaties will be railroaded through the Syrian and Lebanese parliaments on the first quiet day.

But would the Jews be as accommodating? Even when Palestine Jewry was shaking in the first ecstasy of thankfulness to the UN, the dark Revisionists stayed morose and belligerent. No satisfaction for them, this miserable little morsel of a Jewish "state," with its surrealist frontiers impossible to defend, like a house with Arabs in the kitchen and Jews in the parlor. What we need now, an Irgun major told me, is not a boundary but enough immigrants and guns.

"Then we'll be ready to carve out a real Palestine—both halves of partition and

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Transjordan as well—by the only method the Arabs (and the world) respect: force."

If public opinion in Britain today demands an end to the disastrous occupation of Palestine, it is in no small part due to the effectiveness of Jewish terrorists with landmine, grenade, pistol, and rope against unfortunate young men wearing the King's colors.

"The terrorists defeated us," British officers admit. "We couldn't track them down. The Jewish population was too frightened of them to help us." Well, suppose the UN reneges on partition. Might not the outraged Jewish community turn to support of the terrorists, no longer because of fear but out of desperate conviction? How long would more moderate voices in the Agency prevail? How safe would the pipelines be against terrorist wreckers? What hope would there be then for that peace and tranquillity which seem so desirable to American interests?

No, many good Americans will say that our strongest line in Arabia can only be fulfillment of our partition pledges. Down with the Arabists of the State Department who argue away the value to us of a Jewish Palestine by denying its existence. Put an end to the amateur diplomacy of a Pentagon cluttered with statistics and supply charts but ignorant of what goes on in the hearts of peoples. (Even Secretary Marshall, upon reading a Palestine plan of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is reported to have roared at its political ineptitudes.) Let us reject the barren legalism that contends we must not lead the UN by the nose: on the contrary, the smaller states resented our silence after partition as a sign of our letting them down. Let us make up our minds that the Arabs can be "conciliated" only by a show of power. Forty thousand well-equipped men of the Haganah will speedily acquaint them with the realities of disciplined battle. And if there has to be an international force, let there be one, because a beginning must be made somewhere if the UN is ever to grow teeth and not go down gibbering like the Geneva League.

So run the contentions of many who know the Middle East in their own intimate way and have had a bellyful of procrastination. They want justice for the Jews, for a UN whose future is being made or broken over the windy tables of Lake Success, justice even for a United States in danger of sacrificing its moral leadership abroad and its liberal support at home if it shows itself no less power-hungry than the Soviet Union. One has to confess that this kind of argument brings a lump of exaltation to the throat.

Yet this writer, who has tried to remain impartial here at the risk of chafing his feet on a tight wire, is compelled to note that there are some grave uncertainties which call for careful second-thinking if we are to put emotion aside and examine partition entirely in a hardheaded "political" way. Whether these uncertainties in the partitionist case constitute a "reasonable doubt" strong enough to dictate another line of action is a matter which each man will have to resolve for himself.

To begin with, did American support of partition in the Assembly irrevocably commit this country and the UN to all-out implementation to the extent of war against the Arab world?

It is true that certain highly-placed Americans, in their zeal for partition, went so far as "arm-twisting" to obtain the favorable votes of various minor UN members. It is true the Arabs gave us plenty of notice they would fight to the death. And it is true that British encouragement and American timidity built up the Arab strength.

Still, Zionist spokesmen did assure the UN that the Jews could manage the Arabs if only partition were voted. The United States, in supporting partition, did tell the Assembly that we expected the Charter would be observed. It now appears possible that Palestine's 600,000 Jews are weaker and the Middle East's 40,000,000 Arabs stronger than advertised. Should the United States plunge ahead nevertheless? Should the UN, dedicated to maintaining peace rather than provoking war, also plunge ahead? Would

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reconsideration of partition really be a catastrophic blow to the UN, or might it not instead show the UN's sobriety in re-examining a "hasty" decision?

As for the Arab feudalists, they are hardly likely to turn their faces to the Kremlin in quest of a new Mecca, or sever the oil pipes which pour the lifeblood into their rickety regimes. But can we be *sure* the Arabs are bluffing?

I have heard it archly suggested that the last time the West thought the Arabs were bluffing, the Crusades proved the Arabs were not. And if there is a reasonable doubt, are we justified in risking access to oil, incursion of the Russians, opening of a Soviet backdoor to Greece and Turkey, crippling of ERP—jeopardizing, in short, of our entire defense against Moscow's special brand of the one world?

It is troublingly significant that, west of the Hudson during the fateful months after partition, the American grassroots seemed apathetic to the heroic spectacle of beleaguered Palestine Jewry. Washington kept silent except for a few Congressmen—most of them with Jewish constituents. I inspected big batches of pro-partition telegrams to the White House but found only one in about every fifty where the sender's name sounded possibly non-Jewish. Senator Brewster is reported once to have said he would not venture the life of a single American boy to defend the oil companies' property in Arabia. Would American mothers think only righteous thoughts if their boys died in the Palestine sands "in defense of the Jews"? If partition embroils us with the Arabs and gives the Soviets a foothold, might the reaction not single out American Jewry as "responsible"? Such considerations are not valiant, but neither are they craven when one reflects that a sound and safe Jewish community here is not only an end in itself but the indispensable reservoir of aid to any thriving Jewish Palestine.

There is, finally, the dreadful question of sheer physical survival in Palestine. Publicly, Haganah has proclaimed its ability to stand its ground, even without UN troops or equipment, after the British leave. Privately, Zionist leaders admit they are living through the present desperate hour on hope rather than confidence. They are compelled to envisage even the prospect of complete annihilation. But is not a course which may lead to mass suicide, to the destruction of everything in Eretz Israel—man, woman, child, treasure, and dream—a course of infinite folly? And who, incidentally, will protect the 800,000 non-Palestinian Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in the event of a *jihad*? Must we, out of allegiance to an untested solution, risk the gamble of extermination?

SUCH are a few of the dilemmas arising from the crisis of partition. I have tried in this article to accomplish an objective assignment: to set forth, insofar as they were ascertainable, official American motivations in the Middle East and to examine their validity in Palestine, pro and con. The imponderables are too many for anyone to deliver an opinion with the force of certainty. For myself, I am inclined to favor the resolute approach to the Arab challenge, on the grounds that we cannot—neither the Jews, nor the United States, nor the world—we cannot forever go on temporizing with lawlessness. But I would not urge it as a dogma upon any man to think as I do. The stakes are too large and the consequences of error enormous.

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MIDDLE EAST MOVES AND COUNTER-MOVES

Russia, Britain, and the Arabs

JON KIMCHE

THERE are few things more deceptive than large-scale maps of the Middle East. On them the Middle East countries snuggle so closely under the overbearing Soviet shadow that Russia's favorable strategic position vis-à-vis the Middle East is generally taken for granted. This assessment of Russia's strategic situation can be seen at the root of one of the most outspoken fears that has been expressed since the United Nations Assembly voted for the partition of Palestine: that this will enable the Russians before long to use the Arab-Jewish conflict as a pretext to march troops into Palestine and gain the military foothold in the heart of the Middle East that they have so long sought.

Such apprehensions have been reported from a spokesman of the American General Staff; they have been expressed by Senator Brewster; and they have been expressed with particular bluntness by the representative of conservative Catholic opinion in Britain, the weekly *Tablet*, which describes the Assembly vote as a "disastrous decision" and adds the fear that the Russians will make the most of the military foothold they have gained in this way. Similar anxiety about Russian intentions was expressed just two years ago, in the winter of 1945, when the Russians appeared to be extending their position in Azerbaijan in Northern Persia. Then, too, the world press and military opinion in the interested countries were alarmed by the prospect of Red troops advancing in the Middle East.

ODDLY enough, there was then, as there is now, one important breach in this alarmist front. The British Imperial General Staff, which has perhaps more actual experience of communications and warfare in the Middle East than any other similar body, did not in 1945 consider the Russian advance in Northern Persia as a serious military threat to the Middle East. Similarly, it does not now share the fears that internal conflict in Palestine will lead to the entry of Russian armies.

Actual experience of the distances and the terrain over which the Russians would have to march from Baku to Tel Aviv has convinced the British that this is plainly impracticable. The distance by road is about 2,500 miles—considerably greater than the distance by road from Moscow to London. The ground over which the Russians would have to come is alternately rugged and mountainous and then waterless desert, and would require a major military operation as well as considerable time to be carried out. Considered in this sober light, the British military advisers have concluded that for Russia the reward of having some troops in Palestine, and perhaps even a small military base, would not warrant the expenditure of military effort, accompanied by unforeseeable political complications, which such an

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IN THE discussion of the Palestine problem, the conflict between Russian expansionism and British and American interests in the Middle East has been a moot subject. With a prevailing dearth of knowledge of that region, extreme statements and highly emotionalized speculation have tended to rule. JON KIMCHE's analysis, here presented, is only one man's view; but it comes from a political analyst of unusual insight who has been in the Middle East in recent weeks, and who has had access to first-hand material. Mr. Kimche, until recently managing editor of the London *Tribune*, is now touring North Africa and the Middle East. He wrote the article "British Labor's Turnabout on Zionism" in the December 1947 COMMENTARY. He was born in St. Gall, Switzerland, in 1909.

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entry into Palestine would require. And while Turkey controls the straits no entry into Palestine can be made through a naval approach.

Indeed, the general view appears to be that such discussion of possible Russian military intervention merely diverts attention from the far more important political and diplomatic aspects of Russian intentions in the Middle East. For it has become clear that Russian diplomacy has a whole series of irons in the Middle East fire.

Since the end of the war, the motives of the Russian policies have been mixed and fluctuating, but they can be reduced to three main heads:

FOREMOST, clearly, was Russian disquiet about her open Middle East flank. Seen from the Kremlin, both Turkey and Persia were springboards lying dangerously close to Russia's industrial vitals: the Caucasian oilfields and the mineral industries of South Russia. And seeing Russian policy at close range in Persia in 1945, in the Middle East in 1946, and in Turkey in 1947, has convinced me that the Russians were concerned to maintain the Middle East in such a condition that no hostile offensive against them could be mounted with the Middle East as the main base.

The second Russian iron in the fire was Middle East oil. When, at the Teheran conference in December 1943, President Roosevelt rejected a proposal made by Marshal Stalin that Middle East oil should be jointly administered by the Big Three, the Russians —it is clear now—decided on a political offensive in the Middle East designed to prevent all Middle East oil from coming under American control, and to provide also a share for the Russians. The mainsprings for this decision were partly economic and partly strategic. The Russian oil industry had been virtually ruined by the German occupation. Production in 1945 had dropped to twenty million tons—less than one tenth of the United States production, and no more than the output of the British oilfields in Southern Persia. It had also become clear that the reconstruction of the Russian oil industry would be a slow business. By 1951 —if the five-year plan is fulfilled—Russia will have from all sources thirty-five million tons, and the Soviet planning authorities estimate that by 1966 the Russian oil industry will produce no more than fifty million tons per year. Yet Russia's annual requirements, even today, are estimated at sixty million tons. It was almost natural that the Russians should cast covetous looks at the rich, undeveloped Middle East oil resources, which in 1951 will be producing over ninety million tons of oil, and by 1965 are estimated to be capable of producing more than double the then scheduled oil output in the Soviet Union. The Russian urge towards Middle East oil was therefore intense, and directly and indirectly this clearly remains one of the telling factors in Russia's Middle East policy.

The third decisive influence on Russia's Middle East policy was the traditional urge of Moscow which had slumbered since the revolution of 1917 and had now powerfully re-awakened: the search for a warm-water port and an outlet direct to the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Stalin's wartime diplomacy had brought back to Russia all the imperial lands which had been lost after the First World War; it did not bring the accession of a port open all the year around and giving access directly to the strategic seas of the world.

IN PURSUING their aspirations in the Middle East, the Kremlin's diplomats made a series of considerable blunders and miscalculations. They overrated at first Britain's military strength in the Middle East, and misread her intentions there. As a consequence, all Russian effort immediately after the war was designed to weaken the British position in the Middle East and compel the withdrawal of British troops from this area by whatever means came to hand.

I well recall conversations in Teheran with a prominent Russian and a prominent American representative in the Middle East at a time when the Russian advance in

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Northern Persia was proceeding apace; and it was evident that American policy in the autumn of 1945 supported the Russian suggestion that both British and Russian troops should be withdrawn from Persian territory. At that time, the Americans seemed to share the Russian illusion of British strength in the Middle East, and every step made by the American diplomatic representatives in Teheran and elsewhere was designed to encourage a British withdrawal.

Throughout 1946, the Russians pursued the opportunity which had thus been presented to them. They supported the insurgent Kurds and Azerbaijanis in Northern Persia; they encouraged the Kurds in Northern Iraq to resist control from Baghdad; they supported the Egyptian demand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and for the revision of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty. At the same time, the Russians developed better relations in Cairo, Beirut, and Damascus with the governments there and generally conducted a lively propaganda for the Russian way of life throughout the fertile crescent of the Middle East. Right through the spring and summer of 1946 they maintained their propaganda and diplomatic pressure on the British, and traveling through these countries at that time one could see the advancing Russian influence on the political thinking of the Arab national movements. And as Russian influence advanced, that of Britain receded, while the American attitude at the time was one of aloof non-intervention and comparative unconcern.

This process had gone so far that in July 1946, Jamal el Husseini, the chairman of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, told me in Jerusalem that when, a short time before, he had returned to Palestine after his wartime exile, he found the Arab movement in Palestine riddled with Communist influence. His first task had been, he added, to devote all his energy to break this Communist infiltration into the Palestine Arab movement. But even while Jamal el Husseini was assuring me that he had successfully eliminated Communism inside the Arab movement in Palestine—and he was probably right—the Secretary General of the Arab Higher Committee, Dr. Khaledi, was telling the foreign press in Jerusalem that the Palestine Arabs would turn to Russia for help, and receive it, unless Britain declared Palestine an independent Arab state. Dr. Khaledi was not bluffing altogether. What he said reflected the climate of Arab opinion in the summer of 1946 and marked the peak of Russian influence in this first postwar phase.

But the Russians had miscalculated. They had overrated their own strength. They had written off the United States as a non-participating factor in the Middle East. They had relied too much on the illusory strength of certain pro-Russian movements, and as a consequence of this chain of errors Russian influence crashed from its peak to comparative unimportance in a matter of weeks.

The pro-Russian autonomous governments in Northern Persia were liquidated by the Teheran government; Pishevari, the Azerbaijani leader, fled to Russia; Mohamed Ghaza, the Kurdish leader, was publicly hanged with many of his collaborators; the Arab League states met in conference at King Farouk's palace at Inchass, and there agreed to strike jointly at Communist and pro-Russian organizations in their countries. Many hundreds were arrested in Egypt, many more in Iraq; in Syria and Transjordan the Communist parties were outlawed. Russian influence was sinking to its nadir.

The new factor which had surprised the Russians was the change of policy by the United States. Instead of non-intervention, President Truman proceeded to prop up the Persian government; he sent engineers, military advisors, and financial experts to reorganize Persia's affairs. American interest in all Middle Eastern countries was further underlined by the extension of United States oil interests in Saudi Arabia. An agreement was reached whereby the United States bought half the output of the British oilfields in Southern Persia. Furthermore,

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a joint Anglo-American pipeline was to be constructed from the British-owned Persian oilfields through Arabia to the Mediterranean.

As the year 1946 wore on, the Russians clearly recognized their mistake. They withdrew directly and indirectly from Northern Persia; they made no further effort to re-establish their hold on the Persian government. They had sought to infiltrate into the Middle East via the comparatively obscure corner of Northern Persia, but they had been resisted and defeated and they now changed their tactics.

Some Middle Eastern experts, particularly in Turkey, hold that in fact the Russian activities in Northern Persia were never really directed against Teheran or primarily designed to bring all Persia under Russian influence. They argue that the masked intention of the Russians was directed against Turkey, and that the Russian positions in Northern Persia were occupied in order to outflank the Eastern provinces of Turkey, and prepare for the next move. This was the demand for a revision of the Montreux Convention which regulates Turkish authority in the straits, and indeed, at that time a coordinated popular clamor was set up in Russia for the return of the Eastern provinces of Kars and Ardahan from Turkey to Russia. In fact, argue the Turks, throughout Russia's postwar Middle Eastern activities, one objective has been constant—Turkey. There was first the attempt on Turkey's flank in Azerbaijan; then there was the direct pressure on Turkey; and now, since the direct pressure has failed, there is another outflanking attempt, this time on Turkey's Western flank, via the new "government" of General Markos. This time, the demand is for the return of Eastern Thrace to Greece, and for the internationalizing of the straits and of Istanbul.

There appears to be a considerable measure of truth in this Turkish interpretation. Turkey is undoubtedly the cornerstone of the Middle East structure as created by the Allies after the First World War. If it were to break or to be turned into a Russian satellite state, then the Middle East would be wide open to pro-Russian influence. This was recognized not only by the British and Americans, but also by most of the Arab states. Iraq and Transjordan, in particular, have assured Turkey of their fullest support, though the Turks have been cautious in their response.

A Turkish statesman explained this position to me last month. He said that, while Turkey seeks the friendliest relations with the Arab states because she does not want to see them used by the Russians as a kind of second front against Turkey, the Turkish authorities are under no illusion that militarily this is either meaningful or important; the only thing that matters for Turkey is the closest relations with one or the other of the two great powers.

Turkey has made her choice and has sided with the United States. She feels confident now that she cannot be broken by either direct Russian pressure or indirect political influence. Inside Turkey there is virtually no difference now between the violently anti-Russian policy of the Turkish governmental People's party and that of the opposition Democratic party. There is widespread agreement among the experts in the Middle East that at least for some time to come "Objective: Turkey" must be ruled out by the Russians as unattainable.

Although the pressure on Turkey has continued unabated in one form or another, and the Turks have been compelled to squander their income on keeping almost a million men under arms, the Russians have clearly directed their main interest elsewhere during the last six months. There has been a distinct reorientation of policy and a marked change of emphasis. The attempt to break Turkish resistance and to win the unqualified support of the Arab states had failed. Plans which had been matured in Moscow to call a great Moslem congress were abandoned, according to Arab leaders who had been in close touch with the Russians. The pilgrimages of Russian Moslems

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to Mecca were no longer encouraged and ceased to receive the benefits of Moscow's full-blooded publicity.

With the realization in Moscow that the second phase of Russia's postwar Middle East policy had also failed, the men in the Kremlin evidently understood the mistake they had made. They no longer ranked Britain as their main enemy in the Middle East, and they no longer saw as Russia's primary objective the expulsion of all British troops from that area.

In March last year, when the four foreign ministers met in Moscow, Marshal Stalin had a private talk with Mr. Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, about affairs in the Middle East. Stalin, to Bevin's surprise, put his cards on the table face upwards. He told Bevin that the Soviet Union would no longer oppose the presence of British troops in the Middle East, in Palestine, Transjordan, Egypt, and Iraq, if the British would not call in American troops to assist them. In other words, the Russians would no longer object if the Middle East remained a specifically British zone of influence, but they would oppose and object if the Middle East became an area for combined Anglo-American activities. The British reply was cautious. Mr. Bevin gave strict instructions to the Foreign Office that everything was to be avoided in the Middle East which would give rise to Russian suspicion that there was a combined Anglo-American policy there.

Therefore, when shortly after Mr. Bevin's return from Moscow the United States government proposed to mediate in the unresolved treaty discussions between Britain and Egypt, the British government told the United States State Department before the offer was made public that it would prefer that the United States did not make the proposal. Mr. Bevin at that time was still concerned to maintain the Russian policy of virtual neutrality of which Marshal Stalin had spoken. The Russians kept their bargain. For some months after the March conversation they gave no support to the Egyptian claims on Britain, and also on the Palestine question in the United Nations fact-finding committee, the Communist view remained markedly non-committal on issues where it differed from the British.

It was a period of marking time for Russian diplomacy. It made no headway with the Arabs; it left the Jews in some doubt about its policy in Palestine; all that was clear was that Moscow was trying hard to prevent American influence extending through the whole Middle East. At the same time it seemed to be clear that it was playing a losing game, that American oil companies were extending their influence over the entire Arabian peninsula, and that whether the British liked it or not, they were in fact the partners of the United States in its Middle East policy. As the Russians saw it, British troops were the shield behind which American economic influence expanded swiftly throughout the Middle East.

The break came in the Middle East at the same time as in Europe. When Molotov walked out of the preparatory conference on the Marshall Plan in Paris in the summer of last year, the tacit Bevin-Stalin agreement of the previous March also came to an end. Russian policy in the Middle East had then played almost all its cards. The Russians had no friends left, few supporters, and virtually no contact in the Middle East.

At this point they turned to the support of the creation of a Jewish state and the partition of Palestine. It may be doing them an injustice to put the cause and effect so baldly. There is no doubt that humanitarian considerations and sympathies also played a part, but Russian policy has always been sufficiently realistic not to be swayed by sentiment. In the light of previous Russian tactics in the Middle East, support for the Jewish state was neither a deeply laid plot nor a far-seeing plan, but rather a last hope that this might be better than nothing, and that in this way something might yet be saved from the wreckage of Russian Middle Eastern policies.

But even while the Jewish state was be-

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ing voted in the Assembly and the Russian and American delegates were shaking hands, Russian policy turned again to make one more effort to win Arab support. The whole Moscow propaganda machine was directed towards the Middle East. The new policy was outlined in an editorial in *Pravda* and a long article in the authoritative Moscow *New Times*. The *Pravda* article was entitled: "Who are the real and alleged friends of the Arab people?" It said:

"American imperialism, striving to place the Arab East under its own control, is playing a double game. On the one hand it is supporting the weakened British partner, using the British army and the British colonial intelligence apparatus as a police force against Arab liberation movements. On the other hand, the United States is intensively promoting her economic expansion, seizing one British position after another.

"The reactionary Arab feudalists, on the strength of their foreign support . . . spare no efforts in their attempts to divert the Arabs from the struggle against their real oppressors—the Anglo-American imperialists. They obediently repeat after their masters that the peoples of the Arab countries are menaced only by one danger, namely the Soviet Union."

The article then warned Arabs not to be misled by their false friends into making Palestine the main issue, but to concentrate on the real struggle of getting rid altogether of British and American influence in the Middle East. If they did this they would enjoy the whole-hearted support of the Soviet Union in this endeavor.

In light of these signs, it has to be expected that as the first phase of this Soviet offensive to regain Arab friendship, a full-scale political offensive will be directed against the remaining British positions in the Middle East: the British troops in Transjordan and in the Canal zone of Egypt, and a little later perhaps, the British oil concessions in southern Persia. The British authorities became convinced towards the end of 1947 that against such Soviet pressure backing the rising tide of Arab nationalism, it would be impossible for any length of time to maintain these garrisons in the Arab countries. As a result, a marked re-orientation in outlook took place at the Foreign Office—though it would be over-stating the change to speak already of a new policy or detailed new plan.

These new ideas began to take shape during the United Nations discussions on Palestine and the fruitless private talks between the British Ambassador in Cairo and the Egyptian government, and they crystallized in a new pattern of British policy in January of this year. Once again, the British took the initiative in an activist Middle East policy—but with one important difference from previous British policy. The British government had this time talked over its ideas with the American State Department, and had received not only its tacit consent, but actual and firm assurance of United States support for Britain's new policy. And this policy was now also closely interlocked with Russian intentions in the Middle East; for the moment, at least, the Russians were thrown on the diplomatic defensive.

The new British plan was not a clearly and carefully thought-out long-term project, but emerged rather from a series of *ad hoc* decisions which, more by accident than design, assisted by no little diplomatic shrewdness, merged into the new pattern.

It started with the new treaty negotiation with Iraq. For eighteen months the Iraq government had pressed for treaty revision which legally was not due for another two years. After the United Nations discussions on the partition of Palestine, the time was considered suitable, in view of Britain's neutral stand, to proceed with the negotiation of a new treaty. It was decided in London to make this new treaty an example to all Arab states of what Britain can still do for her friends and allies.

The Iraq government was assured of military support in a manner never before given to any other government in a British treaty of alliance. The armed forces of Iraq were to receive military and air force training and

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equipment in arms, planes, and ships of the most modern type "on the same priority as the armed forces of Great Britain." The actual signature of the treaty in Portsmouth was conducted with pomp and circumstance not equalled since the signing of the Entente Cordiale of 1906.

The treaty was designed to serve a double purpose. It was to re-establish close relations between Iraq and Britain, and it was designed to place Iraq at the head of the Arab League states, and so weaken the position of Egypt which hitherto has played the dominant role in the Arab League. While the Iraq treaty delegation was in London, Sir Ronald Campbell, the British Ambassador in Cairo, had come to London to report on his private talks with the Egyptian government. These reports convinced the Foreign Secretary that any hope of a new treaty of friendship and alliance with Egypt had to be buried. It was felt that with Egypt in her present anti-British mood, the position of the Arab League as an ally might also be jeopardized. It was from this point that the plan developed to make the Iraq treaty something of a prototype for other Arab and Moslem countries, and to begin the erection of a diplomatic structure which could in time supersede the Arab League, and which would be in friendly alliance with Britain.

A NUMBER of dramatic reversals of policy followed in pursuit of this idea. In the first place, the American State Department was taken into confidence, and at the same time that Mr. Marshall was informed of Mr. Bevin's intentions with regard to a Western union in Europe, he was also informed of these new ideas about a Middle Eastern alliance. The Foreign Office in London was extremely pleased with the reception that this latter project received in Washington and proceeded confidently with the new scheme —though it must be emphasized all the time that there was no overall blueprint, but rather a series of decisions arising from the current situation.

Probably the most important British decision in this connection was the abandonment of hope of a settlement with Egypt, and the resulting conclusion that the Russians from now on would fully support Egypt against Britain, and use Egyptian nationalism to break the pro-British front in the Arab League and inside the Arab countries. A second conclusion along similar lines was that the new Jewish state might also become a fruitful base for Soviet activities, not because the Jews desired this, but because the British policy of neutrality and the American policy of hesitation would tend to throw the Jews into Russian arms, much as the Spanish Republican government was forced to look to Russia for help when France and Britain declared their non-intervention in 1936.

THE new series of treaties with Arab states is therefore mainly designed to counter this increase of Russian influence via Egypt and the Jewish state, and to isolate diplomatically, as it were, Egypt and Jewish Palestine in such a way as to minimize their future influence in the Middle East. No difficulty about this is anticipated where the Jewish state is concerned, but the Egyptian problem is more delicate. In fact, the British government has come up against a whole series of contradictions in its policy and the outlook for the new chain of alliances is becoming less sanguine. The Iraq treaty discussions in London were followed immediately by talks with a treaty delegation from Britain's staunchest ally in the Middle East, Transjordan. However, the emissaries of King Abdullah received a grave shock when they met Mr. Bevin. He told them that Britain had changed its policy about King Abdullah's plan for a Greater Syria. For many years the British had actually supported Abdullah's aspiration. Then, last year, they conducted a minor retreat from their previous position, and declared themselves "disinterested" and stated that this was a matter for the people concerned to decide, though privately Abdullah continued to receive no mean support for his plan from the British. Now Bevin told the Transjordan delegates that Britain was positively and definitely

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opposed not only to the idea of a Greater Syria, but also to the smaller plan of a Greater Transjordan, which would incorporate the Arab sector of Palestine.

The purpose of this rebuff to Abdullah was to pave the way for the extension of the alliance to Syria, which hitherto had remained firmly outside the British zone of influence. The Syrian government has recently been greatly disturbed by King Abdullah's increased activity and propaganda, and Britain expects that it will jump at the prospect of what is a virtual British guarantee of the independence of the Syrian state as it exists at present. This definite turn against the aspirations of King Abdullah may also encourage King Ibn Saud to join the select circle of the new British alliance; that at least is the hope of the Foreign Office.

But even so, the British are still worried. They see no strong and popular leadership of Western calibre in any of these Arab countries, which could, if it came to the test, stand up to the combined pressures of Russian imperialism and Egyptian nationalism. Once again, therefore, some of the more far-sighted and leading officials at the Foreign Office are casting further afield. They would like to bring Pakistan, with its eighty million Moslems, and its able British-trained statesmen and administrators, into the new alliance as the leading element. Pakistan, in fact, would become the cornerstone of the new alliance which might stand up against the dangers which the British foresee for themselves in the Middle East.

Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan might also be included, but these countries are considered far less important in view of the role now allotted to Pakistan as the new leader of the Moslems in the Middle East. That is the plan. Already, in its first unfolding, it has encountered serious difficulties with Iraq, but the British are convinced that, with America backing them up, the unholy alliance of right-wing pro-Nazis and Communists that overthrew the Iraq government which had signed the treaty with Britain cannot last, and that before long the Iraqis will return to the British fold.

For the moment, therefore, the Russians are on the defensive, trying to prevent the new British pattern from taking shape, because behind it they see a design encouraged by the United States. In this situation, it appears that things will happen much as the Foreign Office fears: the Russians will now encourage the Egyptian demands against Britain; they will naturally encourage both the Iraq Left and Right to hold out against ratification of the treaty; and if Syria joins in with the new plan of alliances, the Russians may add fuel to the anti-government forces in Syria among the many minorities there.

Finally, there remains the Jewish state. The British Foreign Office thinks that while there is no danger that it may become a base for Russian military operations in the Middle East, it may nonetheless become a loophole through which Russian agitation may seep into the Middle East.

And it must be said that the present policy of Britain and the United States in Palestine appears almost designed to force the Palestine Jews—however unwilling they may be—into the arms of the Russians.

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PSYCHIATRY FOR EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY

The Present Vogue—and What Is Behind It

SIEGFRIED KRACAUER

PSYCHIATRY and particularly psychoanalysis are now enjoying an amazing vogue in this country. In the prewar decades, the vogue was confined to intellectuals; today it has spread until it has become a mass phenomenon. In the words of Dr. C. Charles Burlingame, a leading psychiatrist: "Hundreds of thousands of persons, satiated with a superficial knowledge of the psychological implications of life and literally preoccupied with psychiatric terminology, are beginning to interpret every trivial thought and feeling in psychological terms."

Particularly symptomatic of the fascination psychiatry exerts today are Hollywood's psychological films—a trend that began around 1944 and remains unparalleled in other countries, with the exception perhaps of England, where it has made only a hesitant beginning. These films endow psychiatry with an illusionary glamor. As pictured by Hollywood, it is not so much a science as a superior system of magic practiced by a species of miracle worker. That on occasion one of these miracle workers misuses his magic for criminal ends only enhances its awe-inspiring uncanniness. In *Spellbound* the homicidal psychiatrist and his law-abiding colleagues engage in a struggle reminiscent of the contests between sorcerers in old fairy tales. Compared with these modern sorcerers, detectives have become rather dull-witted, as can be inferred from *The Dark Mirror,* in which the psychiatrist leaves the detective far behind in tracking down a smart murderess.

Thus, Sherlock Holmes has yielded to the analyst, common sense to the play of free associations, and the gun to the couch. But even the couch is no longer needed, for, unlike their counterparts in real life, most screen psychiatrists set aright the gravest mental derangements in six easy lessons. The very speed of their therapy adds to their stature as master-minds. (To be sure, in a silent film, *Secrets of a Soul,* made in 1926, the German director, G. W. Pabst, demonstrated that it was quite possible to impress upon spectators the slowness of psychoanalytical treatment and yet sustain dramatic suspense.) Once restored to normal, the patients usually return to the tasks of life and solve them with the greatest ease. The heroine of *Lady in the Dark* ends as a lady in the light, and the amnesia-stricken girl in *Shock* happily marries her lieutenant. Psychiatry, at least on the screen, appears able to solve anything.

How explain the average American's infatuation with psychological procedures? Dr. William C. Menninger recently stated

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FOR a few years now we have been deep in a flood of Hollywood films and fictional and non-fictional best-sellers built around psychiatry and psychoanalysis; and there have been few days when the press has not featured a pronouncement by some governmental, welfare, educational, or military authority on similar themes. All these testify, if not to the fact that all Americans are mentally sick, to the presumption that most literate people in this country seem to think they are. How account for this psychiatric vogue? SIEGFRIED KRACAUER, who here attempts to explain the larger significance of this current mass preoccupation, has a distinguished record as a social psychologist. From 1920 to 1933 he was on the staff of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and directed that paper's literary supplement. He came to this country in 1941. Dr. Kracauer is the author of the much-discussed *From Caligari to Hitler: a Psychological History of the German Film,* published last year by Princeton University Press, and his article "Hollywood's Terror Films" appeared in this magazine in August 1946.

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that "the neurotic patient represents a majority of all the patients who seek help from physicians" (*New York Times*, April 29, 1947). And patients of this kind are found not merely among the well-to-do. Military experience has shown "that the neurotic young man, as seen in army induction centers, came from the middle class as well as from the underprivileged," Dr. Marynia F. Farnham states. People in all walks of life, then, are suffering from neuroses. And the most obvious conclusion that suggests itself is that the present-day attention to psychiatry must be accounted for by the existence of an unprecedented amount of mental maladjustment.*

IN PRINCIPLE, however, most people, laymen and psychologists alike, agree in attributing the impressive spread of emotional disturbances to the heightened pressure of social factors. That we are mentally sick because the social structure is sick, is the opinion most frequently heard. One might expect, therefore, that popular imagination would turn from neurotic symptoms to social causes, and emphasize, not so much the importance of psychiatric cures as the necessity for environmental changes and the reform of society. Yet the spotlight remains unwaveringly focused on psychiatry.

The fact is, though most of us agree that society is at the bottom of many psychological maladjustments, we seem to act on the reverse principle that society is sick because we ourselves are sick. Dr. G. B. Chisholm, Canada's Deputy Minister of National Health and formerly Director of General Medical Services for the Canadian Army, explains wars by the frequency of neurotic ills traceable to the immaturity of the masses: "The necessity to fight wars . . . is as much a pathological psychiatric symptom as is a phobia. . . . They are alike irrational behavior patterns resulting from unsuccessful development and failure to reach emotional maturity" (*Psychiatry*, February 1946). In this country many a psychologist thinks along similar lines. For instance, Dorothy W. Baruch considers proper child training the ideal antidote to race hatred.*

History teaches us that this shift of emphasis from outer to inner conditions is usually provoked by the impact of drastic social change and crisis. The vogue of psychiatry in my opinion owes its existence to two attitudes forced upon us by the present pressures of American civilization. One attitude amounts to an evasion. The other results from an attempt to compensate for the lack of what I would call emotional behavior patterns.

THE evasive attitude is the outcome of the all-pervasive atmosphere of menace and danger arising from the impact of such dreaded social and political developments as "the coming depression," war with Russia, and the atomic bomb. These threats fill the headlines of our newspapers and the recesses of our minds. It seems paradoxical, but the undeniable improvement of living conditions in this country has seen at the same time a steady decrease in emotional security. The naive optimism so characteristic of America, already shaken in the wake of depression, has definitely given way to widespread malaise. People are possessed by a haunting fear of what the future may have in store for them.

The fear is intensified by our awareness of how difficult it is for each of us as individuals to control or alter the course of events. Especially now that the United States has become such a dominant world power, public affairs assume giant dimen-

* Is the current ratio of neuroses higher than in the past? This question is difficult to answer, for what we have meanwhile learned to define as a neurosis may, prior to Charcot and Freud, have been diagnosed as a case of witchcraft, traced to organic diseases, or considered a moral deficiency.

* Baruch: *The Glass House of Prejudice* (New York, William Morrow, 1946). At one point she says: "The ideal thing, obviously, would be if hostility could be recognized right in the family where it usually generates. If children could grow up learning to face themselves in their moments of anger, and bring the anger out directly, they would not have to repress it so that it would move out of their conscious minds, and, in consequence, out of control."

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sions that make it all but impossible to establish a meaningful relation between our immediate acts and the large but remote issues at stake. One act may have various incalculable effects, and one effect may be caused by several diametrically opposed acts. So the feeling grows that we are less than ever masters of our destinies. This is why many people—in particular middle-class people—have relinquished the attitude of active agents and become passive consumers who unhesitatingly buy whatever society hands down to them. This acknowledgment of social and political helplessness and the consequent adjustment to it inevitably deepen inner insecurity.

Perhaps this insecurity would be less acute were it not sustained by a spiritual crisis so profound that it affects the very roots of the American myth. Uncertainty as to the future wears away faith in attitudes and convictions held sacrosanct in the past. The present state of world affairs, along with our recent war experiences and our new international commitments, may have hastened this crisis. It is true that the average American repudiates Russian totalitarianism and looks distrustfully upon the socialist experiments in Europe; yet in a world becoming ever smaller the emergence into concrete action of hostile myths constitutes a troubling challenge to his own "American dream."

The fact is that, much as he clings to his way of life, the average American is no longer in a position to take its fundamentals as much for granted as he used to. Individual freedom has become a matter of controversy rather than a live experience; and such ultimate issues as free enterprise vs. planned economy become slogans precisely because the issues involved can no longer be decided with certainty. Values that once formed implicit parts of our myth and *therefore did not need to be mentioned* are now being dragged into the arena of discussion.

The end of our way seems lost in a mist. To be sure, we improvise day-to-day decisions, but underneath there is always a gripping uncertainty about the system of values in which they may be rooted. Emotional insecurity grows as we are deprived of the psychological shelter that supreme, unquestioned values afford us. Most of us cannot stand being mentally shelterless, and we instinctively avoid any direct approach to social and political problems for fear lest our doubts about our traditional values be resolved into a negative certainty. Instead, we use the one escape route left: we retreat from society to the individual. The Stoics under the Roman Empire did more or less the same; and indeed all the great turning-points of history have witnessed similar phenomena.

THE evasive attitude is well illustrated by the hero of Arthur Koestler's novel, *Arrival and Departure*. A wartime refugee from a Nazi concentration camp, this young revolutionary has come to realize that he was wrong in siding with the Communists. He recants his faith in Russia without, however, coming to believe in the blessings of Western democracy. His beliefs are shaken, his mind is blank. Profoundly upset, he contracts an ailment—a lame leg. He consults a woman psychoanalyst, and she helps him identify his one-time Communist fervor as the aftermath of sinister childhood experiences. The whole process is a flight from the social to the private sphere.

This is a model case. Many people in a state of mental helplessness caused by external factors suffer intensely under their insecurity and more often than not develop neurotic symptoms like those of Koestler's hero. But in the final analysis they prefer continued neurotic suffering to the necessity of confronting their fundamental doubts. Some emotional disturbances become useful simply because they enable us to escape the sharper, but in the end more efficacious, emotional disturbance that would result from modifying our values and beliefs to fit new situations. The very same evasion that prefers to call on psychiatry to remedy its after-effects rather than face the facts, is to some extent responsible for the real difficulties that prompt the evasion. Cause and effect pursue each other in an endless circle.

It should be added that Koestler's story

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continues on a note that reveals an even more dangerous tendency. Having won sufficient insight into himself, the hero is relieved of his ailment. But his cure only encourages him to explain all socially accepted beliefs as projections of psychological processes. His decision to fight for England, though made to appear an act of personal decency, is a transparent device. He eludes his torturing uncertainty about values by draining the values themselves of their objective significance: values are made to seem nothing more than temporary psychological solutions. Psychological argumentation thus supersedes the concern with content—a rather popular tendency at present, but one that strips life of its meaning.

THE other impulse behind the current vogue of psychiatry is, as I have intimated at the beginning, our need for, and our present lack of, behavior patterns. This need, though by no means of recent origin, has of late become particularly urgent. Growing out of the situation of a young civilization, it has been strongly determined by three factors: the primitive habits of colonial life, the sloughing off by millions of immigrants to America of their "fettering" Old World traditions, and the circumstance that the major developments of this civilization happen to have coincided with the rise of industrialism.

All three factors have left their imprint on American life. Any society provides its members with a network of rules, codes, mores, and patterns enabling them to discharge their latent instinctive energies and faculties in various commonly understandable ways. But our society is historically conditioned to neglect the emotional for the rational, to cultivate utilitarian ends more intensely than emotional aspirations. This does not mean, of course, that we are less gifted emotionally than other peoples; on the contrary, if there is such a thing as a national character, then Americans should be credited with strong and generous impulses and an uninhibited readiness to translate ideals into actions. But it does mean that our civilization or culture has developed no system of communication lines that offers really satisfactory outlets to any large part of our potentialities.

The wide dependence in this country on the radio strikingly reveals the extent to which we depend on substitutes for self-expression. Even in small private gatherings the habit of listening to the inextricable blend of opera singers, news commentators, and commercials gets the better of conversation for its own sake—that free flow of improvised thoughts and suddenly emerging sympathies which involves all its participants to the full, uncovering their boldest dreams and remotest intellectual ties. We have come to prefer any intrusion of the outer world to the intimacy of such exchange, which seems to us a dangerous self-exposure rather than a welcome means of communication. The bar-and-grill, that last refuge of people who like to be together for no purpose at all, not even for fun-making, is being increasingly invaded by juke-boxes and television screens, which further thwart the possibility of really being together.

It is as if we were frightened by the prospect of emotional adventures. Everything becomes shapeless in this menacing *terra incognita* of our personal emotions. The ceremonial of courtship still confines itself to unguarded moments in the dark—alcohol still serves to fill in the gaps; and the Sam Dodsworths with their unsatisfied longings still visit Europe in search of more substantial fulfillment. But does not Hollywood offer guidance? All that it offers is empty glamor and infantile fantasy instead of mature experience, a dazzling make-up to make up for ugliness aglow from within.

For lack of proper outlets, deep-seated desires whose satisfaction is an end in itself flare up and fade away without leaving a trace. In contrast, the slightest effort that serves business interests has at its disposal a rich variety of channels in which to fulfill itself and gain recognition. The elaborate code governing our conduct within the commercial sphere contrasts strangely with the small set of standardized directives that try in vain to cover the vast neglected areas of

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our emotional life. These areas resemble those blank spots on the map that represent territories not yet explored.

At the same time our industrialist society, while explicitly disavowing the seemingly purposeless, tends to exploit it for purposes of its own. Commercial considerations encroach on human pleasures and ends, perverting them into means to economic ends. And as technological reasoning and the acquisitive instinct attempt to reduce our civilization to pure calculation and exclude any kind of activity that has only its own pleasure as end, the private jungle of stillborn passions, aimless drives, and unnamed conflicts within us expands; the result is that we find it very difficult to commune with each other, since all the personal elements that go to make up real communication are kept hidden away in many different such private jungles.

For a civilization that grew up in an age of revolutionary inventions and industrial conquests, it was quite natural to seize upon psychology for the sake of its practical implications.

A twofold use has been made of psychology. First, it has served, and continues to serve, as a technique or pseudo-technique of economic and social advancement: the search for opportunities breeds "how-to-achieve-success" literature. Thus personnel selection by business organizations has come to rely on psychological testing; and at the same time intensified competition leads concerns to resort to psychological techniques to squeeze the last ounce of work out of their employees. Human-relations research in factories now applies itself to streamlining workers' mentality in the interest of higher efficiency. And since private sorrows may prevent some employee or other from giving his full, many an organization has hired psychologists whose function it is to lift production or step up sales by mending broken hearts. The relation between means and ends could not be reversed more drastically: happiness has now become a means to efficiency.

Secondly, psychology has been called upon in this country to facilitate self-expression and self-communication. It is noteworthy in this connection that psychoanalysis was adopted in America at an early date, and more readily than anywhere else. We seem to have been predisposed to it; in fact, for decades we have as a matter of course conceived of personal relations in terms of *personality* problems. This tendency pervades popular magazines and daily life. Schoolboys speak of their "inferiority complexes," lovers discuss their "frustrations," and mothers assume the attitudes of social workers. It is with the ease of an old habit that we dress personal urges in the terminology of psychological science.

That the urges for self-expression are often mixed with desires for wealth and power—"how to win friends *and* influence people"—should not prejudice one against their genuineness. People really wish and need to make friends, to shape and make manifest what they feel they have within themselves. But left in the lurch by our culture, they do not know how to formulate and express their personalities in spontaneous and accepted ways. And so, because of a shortage of socially recognized patterns for emotional exchange, they assign to psychology the task of defining their inner wants and engineering sufficient outlets.

It was only because the crises of the prewar years did not basically affect the central nervous system of American civilization that our interest in psychology as a vehicle of self-expression remained rather subdued. However, now that we are undergoing a crisis which threatens our most cherished ideals themselves—a crisis underscored rather than contradicted by the increasingly insistent appeals made to our way of life—this interest has developed from an undercurrent into a declared and almost spectacular preoccupation. The wavering of our fundamental beliefs has still further reduced the possibility, already weak enough, of real personal communication. What few communication routes do exist for the transfer of emo-

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tional currency rest on values and common assumptions that are now imperiled by an awareness that values once held absolute might be controversial after all.

How can one express one's self when confusion as to ultimate values is added to the lack of the finer rules of conduct? Because of such difficulties many people remain, unaware, in a state of complete bewilderment. At least this is what might be inferred from the emergence of certain characters in recent Hollywood films that were rarely encountered before on the screen. I am thinking of the former flight officer in *The Best Years of Our Lives,* of the murder-suspect veteran in *Crossfire,* and of Henry Fonda's Joe in *The Long Night.* All these ex-soldiers drift about in a visionless daze, at the mercy of every wind, benumbed even in their love-making. Perhaps they act this way under the shock of readjustment. On the other hand, if society itself were more articulate, the shock could hardly paralyze them so deeply.

THE contrasts between American and French culture support these observations. France not only lost the war and endured German occupation; she now suffers from a prolonged crisis of her myth—a crisis so poignant that it divides the country into two opposite camps, with the prospect of civil war between them. Yet to all appearances this disintegration of values and beliefs has not yet succeeded in corroding the manifold traditions that control French life. There is, as no foreigner fails to notice, something Chinese about the abundance and rigidity of set conventions in France. They range from elaborate formulas for the complimentary closing in letters to suggestions for delicate love situations; from customs rhythmicizing the average existence to established literary models that qualify vague desires, anonymous moods. Many of these behavior patterns had originally practical functions, economic or otherwise; but with the passing of time they have outgrown these and, with a patina, now serve as means of emotional communication. Taken together, they form a dense texture that tends to perpetuate itself for its own sake, whether sustained by a basic national myth or not.

This texture has an objective character, strikingly illustrated, I submit, by a French colloquialism. Where we would say "I" or "we," the French more often than not use the impersonal "on"—"on s'arrange, on va se promener," etc.—as if to indicate that private life evolves within a universal framework, a sphere of conventions to which all human beings are expected to conform. It is this participation in something objective that, despite their possession of a literature saturated with impressionistic psychological insight, immunizes the French against the encroachments upon personal life of applied psychology. They need not psychologize. Though aged and perhaps frayed, the texture of habits by which they live still protects them from sinking into the unfathomable abyss of ultra-personal subjectivity, from losing themselves in a maze of psychological relations unchecked by fixed meanings and images.

Even in this period of conflicting allegiances and intellectual despair, psychoanalysis is far from being a fashion in France (or, for that matter, anywhere else in Europe). The Existentialists, originally the vanguard of despair, now have turned activists; in an effort to compensate for the waning of the French myth, they insist that social and political decisions be made by the whole, integrated personality. Meanwhile French interest in psychology still confines itself to investigation for its own sake, as, for instance, in the poet François Ponge's literary attempts to X-ray the personality structure of inanimate objects and plants. In contrast to this country, France makes no real demand upon psychology as a means of expediting emotional traffic or compensating for the absence of common beliefs.

THUS the vogue of psychiatry, as I have tried to show, not only originates in extreme uncertainty, but owes much to the fact that American civilization has not yet developed the compact texture of behavior patterns woven by older cultures. If such a tex-

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ture existed in this country, many would not dream of so readily identifying their personal difficulties as emotional tangles to be untied with the aid of a psychoanalyst.

This is not said by any means to belittle the merits of psychoanalytical therapy. I wish only to describe a situation in which this therapy becomes a necessity because of a scarcity of meaningful alternatives. Wide areas of our world remain a vacuum. In that vacuum psychological mechanisms inevitably turn into independent entities and inner conflicts assume an existence of their own. Psychotherapy is a technique that deals with these mechanisms and conflicts by trying to regulate them, by straightening out maladjustments and removing inhibitions. The goal is to enable the patient to cope with reality and make the best use of his energies. Modern analysts logically define their task as emotional re-education.

However, even the most successful re-education of this kind has its natural limits. It cannot alter the condition of our society, nor can it establish content and significance by itself alone. Indispensable as psychotherapy is, its cures do not fill the social void in which they evolve.

This is not generally recognized. On the contrary, there is a persistent tendency to exaggerate the functions of psychiatric practice. We expect its individual solutions to result in social solutions, and thus we burden it with responsibilities beyond its scope. The inherent danger of such an outlook, which is shared even by some misguided analysts, is that it sinks us ever deeper in sheer subjectivity.

And yet our fascination with psychiatry springs from a disquiet that in itself has elements of great hope. People seem to be increasingly aware of the vacuum around them. It is as if they could no longer bear the muddle of unchannelized, unqualified emotions, as if they finally wanted to move out of limbo into a realm in which impulses have a destination and sanctioned images articulate the infinity—evil only when unnamed—of inner processes. Behind the vogue of psychiatry lies a nostalgia for making the deeper layers of the human being really communicable—those layers that till now have been shut off from circulation and light. The will to take these hidden things in ourselves into the open air would indicate that our civilization is beginning to come of age. Should it mature through suffering and experience, its growing wealth of forms, patterns, and imagery would halt our preoccupation with psychology and automatically consume the excesses of our present dependence on it.

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LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY

A Story

LESLIE A. FIEDLER

When Elissa woke, ever so gently, not admitting to herself that she had been asleep, she reached for the box under her pillow and, finding it there as always, was not afraid. She thought for a little while of how she never slept, never—and they would not believe her; and then fishing her Dick Tracy tommy gun out from beneath the bed, she pulled the trigger carefully, not making the rat-a-tat-tat, but only lighting the little red glare at the tip. Fire! The room blushed fitfully, blinked like an eye in the intermittent flame: under the lid, the cracked faces of dolls, the brutal shadows of half-disabled toys. Fire! The jumble of a child's room, half ghetto, half jungle, seemed to her to leap with the lunge of flame at her bed, at her. Fire! She dropped the gun, and the dark, cool as Roy Rogers, rescued her: *thumpa, thumpa, thumpa*—the hooves dying—dying—. The end.

It was then that she realised that she had been hearing the voice of Mrs. Jovanich, its musical whine, the words strangely altered, to which grown-ups for some reason listened so intently. "It's like *The Castle!* Two blocks I have to go—and I am lost! For hours I walk—and then the endless same houses!" Mrs. Jovanich always said things were like *duh Kessel* and once, when Elissa had asked her father about it, he had laughed and shown her the book, the picture of the man who wrote it.

"Is it *real*?" she had asked.

"What? Is what real?"

"Duh Kessel."

"*The Castle*," her father had corrected her, "castle, you know, where a king lives."

"Is it *real*?"

"Well—it's a story, by Franz Kafka. Like *A Christmas Carol*."

"Is *he* real? The writer?"

"He's dead." The answer had annoyed her mother, who had cried at that point, "Benjamin!" and he had amended his answer. "He *was* real."

"Of *course* he's real, dear," her mother had assured her hastily. "Just like Dickens." It was important for Elissa to know these things. Roy Rogers was real, Scrooge was real, God was not real, though people had once thought so.

"The Dickens!" Her father had winked at her to be sure she got the joke.

And now she could hear his voice answering Mrs. Jovanich. "This is embarrassing. I should have called for you. The others have already come and gone. The caroling is over. I wanted—" She tried to fit her father's face to the blurred words, but she could not recall it as it really was, slow and gentle. That other face possessed her, the Castle face, blackish, shining with wet large eyes. From the first, the picture had reminded her somehow of her father, who laughed always and was very sad, but she felt guilty thinking so, though she could not have said why. Remembering it sometimes, she almost cried for loneliness, and would run to touch her mother who knew so surely what was real. Elissa had a word that went with the wet eyes, the loneliness. "Joo," she said quietly to herself, "Joo—"

"Don't be disturbed. Please!" Mrs Jovanich was saying with the strange large ges-

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tures Elissa could imagine. "I will leave. It is a ridiculous hour. But I was sure that this time, *this* time I would not be such a—fool. It is already the third time—"

Three times Mrs. Jovanich had lost herself in the two blocks between their houses, two blocks that Elissa peddled on her bike a hundred times a day—lost, a grown lady!

"It is, perhaps—I mean, excuse me, after what we have been through in Europe, the beastliness, we are all, a little, fools!"

IT HAD not always been so; several times Mrs. Jovanich had found their house without difficulty and her little eyes had shone over the wine, the rapid incomprehensible talk. That had been at first, but after that night on which she had been forced to go home with the terrible headache, she had come less often and always complaining at the door: "I have been lost. It is like *The Castle*!" That night Elissa had come out of her room into the heart of the party at nearly midnight (she could tell time, of course) and, claiming to be hungry, had eaten a bowl of cornflakes very slowly and talked with everyone. Only Mrs. Jovanich had stayed in her remote corner and had said little, though only she had known when Elissa flinched at her mother's using a dirty word. No other mothers said such words, and though she knew there were only dirty *minds*, Elissa could not help her shame. Often touching the box, she would pray: Let me believe my mother!

"This is a little Puritan—" Mrs. Jovanich had said softly, but only Elissa heard, for the rest had forgotten the old woman, laughing and laughing at a story Elissa had begun quickly to tell about her third-grade teacher.

"You will excuse me—" Mrs. Jovanich had had to say three times in a low sick voice before anyone would listen. "My head. I would not wish to disturb you young people. Children are so important in America." She had left quickly, touching Elissa's cheek with a dry finger to say "good night," and adding very softly, more with her lips than her voice, "my little Puritan."

Elissa hated her, and clutching the box in her dark bed, she dared to say, "Let her go away! Please let her go away!" She would not ask though she was tempted: Let her die!

"Anyway, Merry Christmas!" Mrs. Jovanich now said, dismissing Europe, her lost hours in the cold. Elissa had waked without the thought that it was Christmas Eve. "Let nothing you dismay. Yes? It is a beautiful tree, Elissa—magnificent!"

She is talking to my mother, of course, the girl told herself, but she could not help starting at the shared name, shrinking under her covers. "Your father *insisted*," her mother would tell her, her pale head so distant on the long lovely neck that it seemed to mock the child. "I told him *two* Elissa's would be confusing, but he wanted so much for you to be like me—" And she would smile not in apology, Elissa could sense dimly, as most people would, but in pride and certainty. Before that pride, the girl felt forever shamed; she was not a bit like her really.

"Benjamin did most of it," her mother said quietly.

"Liss could have done better. She humors me." She could tell that, in the pause, her father had gathered her mother to him, one hand hanging in incredulous possession over the assured haunch. He touched her always as if to be sure that she was there. "Merry Christmas!"

ELISSA trembled a little to hear the words in his mouth, and that other word, wet and large, possessed her: Joo, Joo. At this time of year, her mother used always to talk to her of their Christmases at home, at Grandpa Littell's, of going out to cut the tree, of the wonderful ornaments that they did not make any more and that small girls could not even imagine, of the splendid presents from people dead before she was born. One year, long, it seemed to Elissa, long ago, she had cried out to her father, who leaned forward without apparent joy toward her mother's words, "Why are you mad, Daddy?"

"I'm *not* mad, Elissa."

"But you *look* mad, Daddy."

"That's my thinking face."

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"Are you thinking of your old Christmases?"

"We didn't have any," her father had said.

"Why? Why, Daddy? Were you always *bad?*" The sudden thought had horrified her and she had been close to tears.

While her father had sought for an answer, the other face had slipped like a mask over his usual look, the Castle face, and her mother had spoken for him before he could begin. "Your father's folks, Grandma and Grandpa Kaplan, they didn't believe in Christmas, they—"

"All right!" her father had interrupted, quite loud for him, "they believed, well—other things. Enough!" and he had tossed her into the air the way she loved, the swoop upward forever, the perilous falling, and, at the last moment, his large certain hands.

But that night, awake for a little while, she heard their hushed voices outside her door: "tell—Joo—tell—Joo." Once her father had cried out, "It's *mine*, my crime, my disease, my sore," and the very end, "If I had thought, marrying you, I would infect you, my children—It's not fair. Forget it." "No fairsies!" she had said to herself, and then the strange word that had recurred, so that she might remember it: Joo, Joo—. She had dreamed that she was climbing a tree to reach a nest high in its boughs; in the nest she could see glimmering a wonderful Christmas-tree ornament, like a star, like her mother's face, but the tree had opened under her into a sudden sore, bleeding, slippery, and she could not hold on—Before that night she had waked to listen for the reassurance of her mother's voice; afterwards, awake, she waited for—the secret.

At the heart of her Christmases, she was aware of the sore, and when, in school, they would sing about the Christ child, Son of the God in whom one no longer believed, she would remember the other face of her father. "Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day. . . ." She did not know why she flinched; it was only a story, of course, a story out of the Bible from which her Grandpa Littell would read sometimes in the evenings, an old book that was not (though she was not allowed to say so to Grandpa) *real*—and that was not even, her father had told her, as interesting as *Tom Sawyer*.

MRS. JOVANICH stood before her bedroom door now, looking at the sign Elissa had so carefully printed and tacked up: OFFICE OF ELISSA. WALK IN. DO NOT RUN. And above it the number 190837. "Ah, it is—cute, yes. A clever child." But Elissa, with the precocity of malice, knew that the old woman was a little irked because there were no conventional childish mistakes, no reversed S's to tolerate. "She is very important to you!" Elissa hoped she would get another headache, but it did not seem worth troubling the box.

"And what is this—this *machine?*" Mrs. Jovanich must have moved over to examine the presents, Elissa decided; it must be very late if the presents were already out, the caroling over. She wondered vaguely if she would be permitted to sip a little egg nog if she got up, but it was easier to lie quite still in the darkness.

"That's a Dick Tracy two-way wrist watch radio," her father explained, and her heart skipped once with the little bound of delight. But why did he sound shy?

"So—Dick Tracy! You have not had yet, poor things, enough violence. You must contrive this comic-page melodrama. It is amusing. As for *us*—" Elissa knew how she shrugged in the pause, the gold cross about her neck leaping to her bewilderment at America.

"And *this* is from Santa Claus?" She must have read the tag. "Another irony! *Santa Claus?* She is a big girl now, your Elissa—nine years old!"

"Eight," her father said. "Won't you have a drink. We have—"

"At nearly nine, it is still necessary for her to believe in Santa Claus?"

"Now, Greta," her mother said, soothingly, using quite uncustomarily her first name.

"But, my dears, Santa Claus!"

"To take that belief away from her," her

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father tried to explain, gently as always, as if everyone were himself, "that harmless belief—what would it leave her? It would rob her of Christmas, make her an outcast, a—a freak!"

"*Santa Claus!*" Mrs. Jovanich insisted on the word as if she could say no more, but could not quite yet leave the subject. She knows I am awake, Elissa thought, she must have heard me; she hates me, she *wants* me to hear this. But Elissa knew already that Santa Claus was not real, though she had never confessed it, sensing that, for some inscrutable adult reason, it was important for her parents to think she still believed in him. Besides, she was ashamed of the way she had found out; at six, she had crept to a crack in the living room door to see Santa, and had watched her parents wrapping and laying out the presents. Sneaky, she had thought, no fairsies—and had crept back to bed knowing that she had betrayed them, but she did not cry. In the end, her discovery became confused with that face, that word—the secret.

Now, without reflection, she rushed into the bright room, into the midst of Mrs. Jovanich's climactic sentence: "God they tell her does not exist—Santa Claus, yes!"

"It's Santa!" she cried in her most babyish voice. "He's been here. He brought me my presents." She still clutched in her hand the box, forgotten. "And the tree—how beautiful!"

She went through the small pretense of discovering the Dick Tracy two-way radio, after first unwrapping a doll, and ran to hug her father, her mother—dropping the box behind her.

"It's Santa," she cried under the nose of Mrs. Jovanich. "Merry Christmas!"

"Just those presents now, dear; save the rest for morning." Elissa looked sullen at her mother's words. "You'll catch cold; it's not very warm in here." The child had wriggled out of her pajamas, as she did most nights, and was quite naked, shivering with delight and the night chill. "Come to bed, dear."

"Liss, you're jealous," Mrs. Jovanich cried mockingly. "The child is even more beautiful than her mother. Please, let her stay a little."

"I'll go to bed now," Elissa said abruptly, and looking up saw that Mrs. Jovanich held the box curiously in her yellowish hands.

"And what is this?" she asked. "You sleep with it, dear?"

"I want it," Elissa said, terrified, completely without grace.

Mrs. Jovanich began slowly to hand it down, but her father, troubled, said, "That's no way to ask for it, Elissa."

"I want it!" she shouted, exasperated at the coming of tears.

"Ben!" warned her mother.

"Ask for it properly!"

"*Benjamin.*"

"I WANT MY BOX!" Elissa kicked at Mrs. Jovanich's shins, futilely, with her bare feet.

"It is late. Poor child! For her we are like the Guardians of the Castle—" and the slow arc of the old hand descended to the level of the child's eyes.

"Elissa!" Her father's hand touched the box at the moment the girl's reached it, and it fell to the floor between them, open, spilling onto the rug the skeleton of a bird, a dried flower. The turned-up lid lay beside it in the unshaded light, inscribed in red crayon, "JOO."

"JOO?" cried her father, and then, "Jew! Elissa, what—"

But the child had grabbed the box, with all her baffled reverence and awe, and screamed passionately from the shadow of her doorway, "Anyhow, he isn't real. Santa Claus ain't *real!*"

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WHY I GAVE UP MY CONGREGATION

Has the Community Repudiated its Rabbis?

"RETURNED CHAPLAIN"

THIS is the story of one who underwent a common experience, but found that it changed the trend of his life.

The outward facts were simple: I volunteered as a chaplain in the army. At the time, I thought I was leaving the path of my career for a temporary diversion. If and when I returned, I would come back to my starting point, back to the rabbinate. But something happened. Physically, I am back where I started; mentally, I am on a different plane and can no longer continue in the old path.

As the personal experience of one individual, this may or may not be interesting—but as such it is not important. However, I have met others who went through similar experiences in the past war. They, too, have come out unwilling to return to their rabbinic duties. And since we do not have enough rabbis on the American Jewish scene, my individual experience may be of some use in understanding what may be happening in many Jewish communities.

IT HAS been known that quite a few in the rabbinate who took leave of absence from their pulpits to serve as chaplains in the army, have returned with a growing sense of dissatisfaction—perhaps with themselves, perhaps with the rabbinate, perhaps with the Jewish community. The present article, written by one of the men who went through the experience of the war and the inner spiritual struggle it provoked, may help to crystallize a few of the problems which more and more have emerged to trouble both rabbis and laymen interested in the spiritual strength and development of the Jewish community. The author of this article was a rabbi for twenty years and has occupied some very important positions in the rabbinate. Since his return from the army, he has continued to work in Jewish life but has given up his congregation—his article may explain why.

I must start by describing some of my background.

I CONSIDER myself a very simple Jew, not torn between external and internal cultures. Jewishness has been inbred in me. So much so, that without formulation I recognize myself to be a natural pacifist. But I have never maintained that war is a sin under all circumstances: my pacifism came from Jewish sources, where the individual human being, the individual life, is given a paramount importance; but from these same Jewish sources, I learned that even though David was not to be permitted to build the temple because his hands were full of blood, yet David had to fight his battles.

The underlying psychological fact involved is the concept that justice and peace are achievable human ideals—but they have not yet been achieved. So long as this remains true, there are situations in which war, even if it is not righteous, is unavoidable.

As early as 1938, I came to the conclusion that war was unavoidable, and, in the recesses of my mind, it became clear that when it came, I could not, as a Jew, stay out of it. While all wars have their economic aspect, this war was largely colored with the problem of justice. And, for that matter, economics, too, is very often a question of justice.

When the war did come, however, I still hesitated. There were younger men who could assume the obligations more easily. It was difficult for me to break with a whole lifetime of peace and don a uniform. But as the call came for more chaplains, and as the call became more urgent and insistent, a sense of duty weighed heavily on me. My personal aversion to war had to go by the board.

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And there was another consideration which had begun to assume importance in my mind. When the war was over, it seemed to me, it would be only those men who had participated in the hardships who would have the right to assume moral leadership among those who had borne the burden of battle. If I was to continue in the work to which I had devoted many years and in which, I believed, I had done some good, then it seemed to me that I had to join with those who were fighting for the cause of justice.

Sum total: I became a chaplain.

It was a new and harsh experience. It was hard to march, to sweep floors, to wash clothes, to make beds and shine shoes. It was harder still to stand inspection and have an old man look behind one's ears for dirt. It was hardest of all to be under orders, often childish orders, sometimes stupid. But I accepted all this as the prelude to a great service to my country, to its people, and to the Jewish people and the Jewish God. I believed the call was for true religious leadership.

Soon I was in service, assigned. My first commanding officer was Jewish. Conscious that I was an orthodox rabbi, he gave specific orders that the chaplain be given no other food than that provided for other officers, lest he observe *kashruth*. The officer personnel of the unit was about sixty-five per cent Jewish. But the commanding officer had set the tone. It took two weeks to make it clear to the other officers that even a rabbi who observes *kashruth* has no horns. It took two months to gain their confidence. Eventually, I became their great friend in all social, personal, and official matters. It was tacitly understood, however, that religion should not enter into our relationship.

With the officers, at least, that great cry I had heard, calling for religious leadership, seemed to have lost its urgency. But there were still the soldiers—the buck privates, the privates first class, the corporals, the sergeants of all grades. There were about four hundred of them in the camp. They were, after all, my real meat. They were—when I had meat to offer. I had only to announce the serving of sandwiches, and I had a hundred and fifty men in attendance. At an ordinary service, if I had twenty I did very well. I do not minimize the importance of the sandwiches. Had the Jewish Welfare Board not done such a great job in supply, the reputation of the Jewish soldier for irreligiosity would have assumed the proportions of a scandal. But one could not escape the implications.

That first assignment was an interlude. Soon I was moved to one which proved to be more permanent. There, I had between fifteen and twenty-five hundred Jewish soldiers. There I had the really heartsick, the broken in spirit and suffering in body. There I worked twelve to fourteen hours a day, visiting the men in the field, speaking to soldiers as they came in from civilian life, announcing through the length and breadth of the camp that there was a Jewish chaplain, that those in need of his assistance should come to receive it.

And they came. Soldiers stood in long queues to see the chaplain. I became popular, I was "building a reputation," I even had "wonderful" attendance at services: between seventy-five and one hundred and fifty. Perversely, I was not happy. I noticed that, with few exceptions, those who came to services were those who had come to camp recently—the disturbed, the bewildered, the unanchored—or those who needed the chaplain's help in some pressing personal difficulty. As they grew more accustomed to their new conditions, as the immediate problems were solved, attendance lessened.

I was too busy to give this much thought. It was odd, however, to recall the gospel of army religion that my civilian colleagues had preached. What civilian life had not been able to do for our children, the army was doing. What civilian rabbis had been unable to accomplish, the chaplains were achieving. Once the war ended, our synagogues would be full, Jewish life would be enriched with an influx of young blood.

Somehow, also, the great cry for religious

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leadership which had induced me to become a chaplain grew fainter and fainter, almost an echo of the romantic unreality of civilian life. I was now a soldier. . . .

It was in this mood, created by a swiftly moving scene where thought was recessive rather than active, that I came to Europe, that world in the travail of chaos. There, I hoped, the truly Jewish spirit might arise: the spirit of God once created order out of chaos; maybe the chaos of Europe would have the power to rouse the spirit of God.

I came toward the end of the fighting. I found that the chaplain was still the chaplain—useful. But religious services were attended even less than they had been in the camps at home. It was, perhaps, not surprising: the pressure of fear and novelty had disappeared, there were many distractions. What was surprising was the attitude of most Jewish soldiers to the Jews of Europe. When called upon, they helped; they were kind; they gave of their rations when it was demanded, and of their money. But the spirit of personal relation, the inner need to act when there was no outward pressure, did not exist. The soldier acknowledged his relationship to the Jews of Europe, but in most cases he did not feel it deeply enough to create a personal contact. Chaplains often found it advisable to maintain a sharp separation between the events arranged to enliven the social life of the soldiers and the events arranged for displaced Jews. When this separation was not maintained, the soldiers too often disappeared from the scene.

Again, we must note some exceptions. There were some men who were devoted in their service to their fellow Jews of Europe; but these were the few; the many thousands remained strangers.

THE ideas which I had held at the back of my mind while I was still in the United States now began to emerge. There would be no rush to the synagogue after the war; there would not even be a rush to Zionism, to Jewish philanthropic work, or to Jewish communal enterprise. What civilian rabbis had not accomplished, the chaplains could not accomplish. The causes were basic, at home, in the Jewish communities. The war could not create a spirit which the home front did not arouse.

Upon my return to the United States, I began to seek the way back to normal life. I spoke to my colleagues who had been in the chaplaincy, and also to those who had remained at home. I observed their activities, I participated in their deliberations, and in the deliberations of laymen and congregations. Somewhere, I thought, I would find the solution to the difficulties I had come to see.

But what I found merely intensified the uncertainty. My colleagues were asking: "How can I now sit down with my sisterhood, my brotherhood, my board?" Even those who had since resumed their positions were disturbed by these questions.

But it seemed to me that such questions placed the problem vaguely. The sisterhood, after all, is no worse, and no less in need, than were the soldiers. The greatest service to the soldiers was not necessarily rendered in battle. With things as they should be, it would have been perfectly logical to sit down with the sisterhood or the brotherhood or the board and give them what service they required. The problem had to be recast more clearly in the light of present and past experience to be understood in its full significance. Here is what I saw:

I saw the rabbinate filled by extremely able men: fine speakers (no ministry can boast of so high an average of preaching ability), cultured, well trained in social approaches, equipped with a background and training that allows them to meet on an equal level with lawyers, medical men, sociologists, educators, or any other professional group they are likely to meet in the average community. They are adept in political and literary discussion and engage in such discussion very freely. I have heard God justified by social theories, the Bible praised on literary merit, Jewish traditions historicized. But I have rarely encountered a simple and complete acceptance of Jewishness that needs no rationalizing. I have

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found almost no sign of that prophetic zeal which such acceptance—and only such acceptance—can call forth.

In brief, I have found talented rabbis, but not rabbinic rabbis. The rabbis, while they may be a powerful influence in the life of the community, have no acceptance in the community as rabbis. They carry weight in all fields where, whatever their rights as men, they have no claim from the standpoint of their life's vocation.

I would like to blame the rabbis for this condition: that would allow me to retain my faith in the people. But what I hear and see in the Jewish community does not permit this consolation. I hear the same talk that I heard before I left. Talk about "enjoyable" services, "satisfying" sermons, "inspiring" synagogues. I hear discussions about the choice of English reading, the separation or non-separation of pews. I see a determined effort to make the synagogue "attractive," as if through some aesthetic magic we could somehow draw in the spiritually inert without having to disturb their inertia. The road must be made easier; the rabbi must draw the indifferent into the synagogue, even if, in the process, the synagogue must be emptied of its meaning and the rabbi voided of his rabbinate.

Unfortunately, the core of the problem lies in the congregation, because the congregation is largely indifferent to the basic problems of Jewish and human destiny. It is unmannerly to disturb a sisterhood bridge game, a brotherhood dinner, by hinting that the rabbi's salary or the synagogue or temple mortgage are not the greatest problems of Judaism. It is enough that the members are making a living, building careers, upholding reputations, making social contacts; and the synagogue is an effective medium in these processes.

And the rabbi is, after all, only a human being with a family and ambitions. He, too, must make his way in the world. To absolve his conscience, he most often closes his eyes and "does a job." If he is more sensitive, he may become cynically heartsick. Or he may delude himself into feeling that he is a martyr who stakes his all on the possibility of some rare moment of influence. Often he diverts his energy to political, fraternal, or other organizations, where he can hide his religion behind a façade of talent and secular usefulness—and his congregation begins to speak of its rabbi as a "leader."

Our children in the army were merely replicas of their parents in civilian life. The army chapel was another synagogue, the chaplain another rabbi. In the army, to be sure, the need was not for social recognition; the need was for the normal home atmosphere, or for the solution to personal difficulties. But it was not a sudden resurgence of a need for God. As a rabbi, the chaplain had no more influence in the army than he had had in civilian life.

Yet this much can be said: in the army, for the first time, the rabbi had the satisfaction of serving usefully in a *field that was recognized as his.* He did not have to push his way into activity. He did not have to buy his right to work at the expense of personal dignity.

So his problem now becomes this: how can he begin again the process of ingratiation to obtain the favor of this one and the good will of that, merely to be able to do the daily work of what is hardly his task? How can he begin to compete with political leaders in Zionism, social service, and other professionals in other fields, while each by implication seems to say, "Go back to your own field," and his own field is a desert of social amenities without content?

The rabbi who finds that his people will not accept traditional religious forms, and that he must become an eclectic borrowing from many fields to fill a void, cannot be really content. Even when he accepts the situation and acts according to its demands, he knows that he has been repudiated. His talent may be appreciated, his influence permitted, but his rabbinate is rejected. In serious moments, he must ask himself again and again whether he would not be better occupied if he used his talents in their proper sphere, rather than in the rejected rabbi-

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nate. For, like other men, he needs to find satisfaction in the main channel of his life, not in its side issues.

I SHOULD like to give a picture of a community in which I, for one, and, I suspect, many of my colleagues, might find it useful and satisfying to be rabbis.

That community would be spiritually alive to the point where it would need a rabbi not "only for the children," not only to bring back the stray sheep, but for itself, because the rabbi would represent for it the ethical and religious tradition of a *living* Judaism. Such a community would be critical of its rabbi, but the rabbi who could measure up to its demands would find a measure of satisfaction to compensate for his efforts. He would find himself at last able to speak in his own idiom, as a complete and self-respecting personality rooted in a deep and old history, and he would no longer have to compete with the theater in pageantry, with the latest best-seller in literary modishness, with the nearest church in ritual appeal. He would serve a community that truly needed a rabbi.

A community that would truly need a rabbi must, however, accept the value—better yet, the superiority—of Jewish ethical tradition. What a statement! Let me enlarge upon it a little.

This does not mean that all Jews are saints, or that no other group has produced a valid ethical tradition. It does rest, however, on the premise that questions of right and wrong have been of more absorbing concern for the masses of our people than for others. This fact has many historical reasons, but the most important is the greater spread of religious scholarship among Jews. Knowledge was not the exclusive possession of priest or rabbi: the law, religious-ethical law, was a common heritage. Anyone could enter the *beth ha-midrash* and study, the carpenter's son in Nazareth or the tailor's son in Russia. The people of the book, in the deeper significance of that phrase, were never mere scholastics: Jewish scholarship transmuted the book into life, ethics into acts, knowledge into conscience. The result was a slow assimilation of ethical tradition by the masses which put the Jews—mass for mass—into the forefront of ethical reality. The Jew became the proud (to his enemies, arrogant) Pharisee, a Pharisee who could face the *auto-da-fé* and the pogrom without loss of faith or dignity.

THE rabbi, basing himself upon the tradition, would not thereby be kept from concerning himself with the pressing and immediate problems of modern life, but he would discuss them on the basis of Jewish insight and principles, drawing strength from Jewish ethical, religious, and cultural concepts. He would be a Zionist, and a Zionist leader. But his Zionism would not be a mere therapy to give his people courage. Nor would the recent barbarities of European civilization frighten him into Zionism. Rather, in strength and dignity, he would find Zionism as natural for a Jew as life itself, and his people would turn to him for leadership without degrading him to the role of politician. He would be a leader in social service, but, again, not as a mere technician and political manipulator: he would try to be the symbol and center of charity, kindliness, and compassion. In public policy and private need, he would try to be guide, teacher, dispenser of consolation. He would try to stand as a protective rock to his people, proud of their spirit, jealous of their dignity.

CAN this picture be made real? I believe it can. But the task is not the rabbi's alone. To create, or even to approach the creation of such a community, a greater sense of cultural responsibility must permeate all Jewish leadership, and eventually the whole mass of the Jewish community. We must become more keenly sensitive to the historic task before us. Historic in the sense of a tremendous past and the creative power that is in it for a better future.

In looking at Jewish life today, one is struck most of all by the "immediacy" upon which Jewish policy and thought are based.

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Rarely is a problem posed in terms of the Jewish people as a historical entity and continuity.

If we advocate the study of Jewish history, it is to help us meet anti-Semitic attacks. If we claim Palestine, it is for the displaced Jews of Europe. If we seek more beautiful synagogues, it is in order to adjust the synagogue to its non-Jewish surroundings.

The life of the moment has taken all our attention. But the life of the moment bears no conviction and has no creativeness. The Jewish youth of the United States remain—in the vast majority—unmoved by the profundities of Jewish tradition and without a sense of their community with all other Jews, living and dead. Even the few who are moved to act by the sufferings of European Jewry, act only as strangers would—for personal reasons, perhaps, or to ease the twinge of conscience, or out of an abstract and impersonal conception of justice. Neglect of home and educational influence have brought forgetfulness and estrangement. The chain of Jewish continuity has lost that quality of historic unity which once kept it unbreakable.

If Jewish leadership would only realize this and begin to insist on the re-education of our people on the basis of their historical ethical-religious background, perhaps the trend might change. We might lose in numbers at first, but we would gain in organizational strength. We would be laying the foundation for a healthy and vital Jewish community, in which Zionism, charity, welfare work, and all other aspects of Jewish life would become easy of achievement—for the guiding and animating principle of that life would once more be the vital strength of faith.

All this is achievable through education, but that education must be more than the usual grab-bag of sporadic lectures and vaguely directed cultural events; it must be a sustained program for the transmutation of knowledge into vital, well-grounded, ethical attitudes.

It is true that the rabbis have failed in their task, but not they alone have failed. Rather they have failed because they have been left alone. The general Jewish laity and leadership have failed them. Only by a re-education of Jewish organizational life and leadership to new goals—or, rather, the old goals—can the ideal of a vital community become approachable. Only then can the rabbi find his place in the community—as others will find theirs.

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TAILOR BOYS

KALMAN HEISLER

Sabbath mornings:
When frock-coated Jews
with phylactery bags under their arms,
fur-hatted heads and shining boots,
quickly slipped through the market place
on their way to the synagogue—
then you, tailor boys,
with your fingers in your vests,
and Khatzivye, the market-wife's girl under your arm,
strolled around the market place,
just happening to pass the synagogue every time.
When the congregation and their presbyters
came out of the synagogue,
you stuck red kerchiefs in your lapels,
cigarette smoke in your bold mouths,
to show everyone:
We—we're socialists, free-thinkers.

2.

Sabbath after eating the pudding
everyone else is lying down:
on the grass in the park,
on the pull-out bench at home,
youngsters cat-napping
in the House of Study and at the Belz klaus
over a volume.
Stores, shops
all locked.
Valexi's dog roaming the street
and the quorum of Gentile pigs round about.
But you, tailor boys, in bright coats,
a crease in your pants, cuffs pressed,
on rubber blocks of Sabbath shoes,
quietly weave through the market place.

3.

In secret you taught me
to nip grapes and currants on the Sabbath.
It's all the same to tailor boys!
Whom is a tailor boy to be scared of?
No householder's daughter
will be his bride, anyway.
And Khatzivye will stand under the canopy with him
any time—right now, Sabbath afternoon.

4.

You fellow tailor boys of my home town,
you dreamed, you hoped, you talked.
The first speeches I ever heard
were in the forest, in secret, Sabbath after eating.
Revolution.
Class struggle.
Tailor boy Silberstein
with the academic hat—
he was the first
to awaken my pride
at not being a householder's son.

5.

You never even dared to dream
of not being tailor boys any more,
you grand tailor boys of my home town.

Kalman Heisler is a Yiddish poet who was born in Komarno, Galicia, in 1902, and came to America in 1921. Until just a short time ago, he worked in dress shops in New York; he now does educational work with the pressers union. Mr. Heisler has published two volumes of poetry and a book of plays, one of which has recently been produced successfully in DP camps in Italy. This poem was translated by Jacob Sloan.

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"GRASS-ROOTS" UNION WITH IDEAS

The Auto Workers: Something New in American Labor

C. WRIGHT MILLS

THE most impressive thing about the United Automobile Workers union is the spectacle it affords of ideas in live contact with power. The ideas are neither new nor thorough-going. The power with which they are connected is considerable, but it is not great. At most this power is held by less than two per cent of the wage and salary workers of this country, and about seven per cent of the organized labor movement.

Nevertheless, the feel of this power and the tang of these ideas in their enthusiastic conjuncture at the last UAW convention, held in Atlantic City in November, was impressive and stirring.

This conjuncture occurs in the midst of an ideological slump on the political front in general, and particularly among New York intellectuals. The failure of the democratic Left all over the world, especially in the American labor movement, testifies to the tragic split between the radical intellectual and the rank and file of organized labor. In this situation, the UAW's show of ideas and power seems like something out of another, more youthful epoch. Cynics may see here only Detroit's lag behind the New York intellectual's sophisticated hopelessness, but there is much more to the UAW than an ideological lag.

For better or for worse, this union is now the power center for labor ideas and the idea center for the American labor movement.

The meaning of the UAW is not necessarily best represented by Walter P. Reuther himself. The ideas that make it important stem from a *team* of young men around Reuther: a body of leaders in many ways unique in recent American labor history; they, more than Reuther, have the chance to give a larger political meaning to their electoral victory at Atlantic City. The power of this union resides in the rank and file itself, which is also a rather unique spectacle in American labor: these men are not only organized, many of them are also unionized.

THE rank and file of the UAW carries its disrespect for authority to the point of being principled about it. To see them in convention is to realize that this union is their creature. Underlying their collective mood is a common denominator: the basic psychology of the "wobbly," the member of the radical Industrial Workers of the World of pre-World War I days. They disrespect authority, even when they have elected it and even when it is expressed quite feebly. Even in this latest convention, which was very tame compared to previous ones, one got the impression of vigorous rank-and-file democracy.

Several explanations of the vigorous de-

RECENT years have been full of disappointments for those who believe that, if we are to have a strong progressive movement in this country, much of the needed fresh thinking, as well as motive power, must come from the ranks of labor. In this article, C. WRIGHT MILLS heralds a new force on the American industrial and political scene that he believes holds high promise. Dr. Mills is assistant professor of sociology at Columbia University and is director of the labor research division of the university's Bureau of Applied Social Research. He is on the editorial board of *Labor and Nation* and has written for *New Republic, Partisan Review, Politics,* and a number of professional journals. Professor Mills is the co-editor and co-translator of *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* and is the author of a forthcoming book, *The American Labor Leader: Who He Is and What He Thinks,* soon to be published by Harcourt, Brace. He was born in 1916, in Waco, Texas.

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mocracy and alert tactics of the rank and file can be offered.

First of all, these men experienced the pivotal years of the big sit-down strikes, and they have come to use the conduct of men during these years as a kind of ideal model, a bench-mark of excellence, which they continue to apply to contemporary situations. "We were young and without firm roots," explains one local leader, "and we had a taste of the real thing." Back of their passage through these militant episodes lies the bitter fight-to-death attitude of the auto industry. The unionization of the industry took a long period of time: there was no one decisive battle. Instead of stabilizing union-management relations, each victory seemed simply a prelude to the next problem. The last giant, Ford, was beaten only in 1941.

Some of the auto workers are ex-miners, or—more important, perhaps—the sons of miners, which is to say, of union members. There are in America today very few *new* unions whose members have family traditions of unionism. The UAW is full of young members with old union traditions. That is a unique combination.

One notices, too, in many of the rank and file, a sort of bucolic roughness of appearance, and one is told: "Those hill-billy boys just don't want to be told what to do. . . they already know what to do." There is in this group the old populist mood of the frontiersmen from the Southern and Western border states. Many of them share with the miners' sons and similar elements a certain release at being let out of the closed communities of their native places into the big industrial areas, and the frustrations and rejections they experience as Southern rural migrants to great metropolitan areas have been channeled into the union. Here, within the generous industrial framework of the new unionism, they have been accepted, and now they are sticking to the union.

Their origins, and the bitter fighting attitude of the auto corporations, as well as the treatment they afforded the workers, account in largest part for a deep insecurity among the workers. This insecurity also arises in part from the quasi-seasonal work rhythm in the change-over of car models; in part, from the fear of age: "The companies kicked out the old guys, and that is why we are so young." Such statements, true or not, are a symptom at once of their insecurity and of the treatment they expect, as militants, from huge agglomerations of capital.

Victory through militant action feeds militancy. "In six or seven years we licked the biggest corporations in the world," a delegate says. The auto workers are a union of men proudly amazed at themselves. Somehow, out of struggle and victory, they have managed to see themselves in a way that seems difficult for Americans to manage: they feel that they are a self-made union, rather than self-made men.

THE vigor of the rank and file, to which all these factors have contributed, has an important effect upon the leadership of the union, and vice versa. No UAW president has been a dominating personality of the John Lewis type. Homer Martin, the first president, tried hard to build a machine and failed miserably: he and his apparatus were thrown out. R. J. Thomas, the second president, merely held together several contesting forces led by strong lieutenants. Thomas never really led the union, the "unity" achieved under him was based on a balance of other men's power. Reuther, the third president, is not a one-man show, and is by no means strongly seated in the sense of having guaranteed tenure. The fact that two administrations have been completely overthrown in the UAW is remarkable when contrasted with the long tenure of office so typical of other unions.

During the late war the UAW leadership, along with other labor leaders, served and depended on the machinery of the state, and was integrated into the war effort. Yet during the war, in 1944, around forty per cent of the delegates to the national convention are said to have voted, against the persuasion of their top officers, in favor of rescinding the no-strike pledge. A leader of that "rank-and-file caucus," Emil Mazey, is now number

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two man in the UAW; the pressure of the rank and file has been powerful enough to win it a place in the first unified administration in UAW history.

But other unions in American history have had alert and militant rank and filers. There is another factor that is important in estimating the character of the UAW. One of the major clues to the politically disappointing history of American unions has been the absence of union-made intellectuals: men who combine solid trade union experience, preferably of a militant character, with the self-awareness and wider consciousness that are the qualities of the intellectual. The key fact about the UAW is that there is a group of such men around Reuther.

Most of them are still under forty. The typical member of this group finished high school in the early or middle 30's, had perhaps a year or two of college, went into the automobile industry as a worker, and became involved in trade unionism in the Valley Forge days of the union. At the same time, he struggled for an education in the larger sense of the word: self-awareness and political consciousness. Minor political parties facilitated this education; he is likely to have served an apprenticeship in the Communist or Socialist party for a brief while.

These men combine trade-union experience with political sophistication; and it is the union that has supplied them with both. They carry the beginnings of a non-middle-class culture: from their most attenuated self-images to the casual songs they sing when they are together, they are workingmen and union men. Being with them, and remembering the dullness of most labor circles, one almost begins to feel that they are in conscious revolt against boredom in American labor.

These men are intellectuals without fakery and without neuroticism. They are eager talkers and ask questions of one another and of outsiders in an honest effort to get answers rather than to defend their own ignorance. They do not compete with one another in the small ways common to so many academic and other circles. In their lives, the gap between ideas and action is not so wide as to frustrate and turn them inward; their ideas are acted out—for better or for worse; unlike so many intellectuals, they are not just waiting and talking their lives through.

The potential role of such union-made intellectuals would be difficult to overestimate. For one thing, they serve as a bridge between the pure-and-simple unionists and the professional staff members—the intellectuals and experts brought in from outside to serve the union. They also link the political world of left-wing ideas and democratic ferment and the economic world of the unionists and the companies, and can become opinion leaders of the first order in both. Within the union they serve as leaven, lifting it beyond mere pork-chop contentment. Non-union intellectuals have already clustered in and around this union because of the union-made intellectuals in it. Here in the making is a center of identification for all intellectual elements in America who have felt themselves homeless and without power and without new avenues of fresh intellectual activity.

Other elements besides the militant rank and filers and the union-made intellectuals are in the UAW; and other elements are in the triumphant Reuther coalition. But there are enough of these two elements at the top and in the ranks to enable us to say that the victory of the Reuther slate is their victory, that the Reuther opportunity is their opportunity, and, above all, that the promise one sees in this trade union is based on them.

Dwight Macdonald reported of the 1943 UAW convention: "The delegates did the talking, in five-minute speeches, with the officers for the most part limited to the same time. By the time it was over, some two or three hundred delegates had taken the floor, many more than once." In 1947, by contrast, not more than fifty or sixty of the two thousand delegates gained the floor on non-procedural questions, and, more important, the men on the floor were not presented

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with, nor did they insist upon debating significant questions.

The only important question put to the floor was whether or not the officers should sign the oath—that one is not a Communist—required by the Taft-Hartley law. Since this discussion preceded the election of officers, the issue served as a test of the men who were up for election. Undoubtedly there were delegates who were for the Reuther faction but against signing the oaths, and more perhaps who were for the Addes faction but for signing, yet they were handicapped and confused by their allegiance to the opposing leaders, and no independent caucus was formed for debate on the question itself. The oaths were signed, although few delegates were completely happy about the result.

The convention as such was neither good drama—a ceremony inspiring the members in their collective aims—nor a good workshop in which policy was hammered out by democratic debate. The whole scene was dominated by the elections of the officers, by rollcall vote:

A man sits on the stage and in a sing-song monotony calls off the numbers of union locals and the names of men. He is answered by voices from the floor of varied pitch, emphasis, and timbre, voices from all over the auto-worker territory. It is a quiet chorus of power hooked up to the adding machine of democracy. Addes stands by the rostrum, the chairman presiding over his own defeat. Thomas, ejected as president a year ago and no longer a factor of consequence, slumps in a chair with knees out, toes in, mouth pouted, small eyes gently winking. The big hall shuffles and murmurs, full of the noise of serious business among the delegates assembled. After four hours a girl brings in the result on a slip of paper: Reuther 5,593, De Vito 303, Murphy 35. The Addes faction, despairing of the presidency, has concentrated its efforts on re-electing Addes to the office of Secretary-Treasurer. When the vote comes in on that office, the battle is over: Addes 2,572, Mazey 4,820.

After the voting is over, everything else becomes anti-climax. Throughout the convention there is no stirring speech over a large issue, and Reuther's press conferences, unlike others he has held, seem always somehow broken off. He gets close enough to satisfy, for a moment and by contrast, your social emotions, but not your social intelligence.

This tameness in floor action and the general lack of drama so disappointed some reporters that one of them even invented "fist-fights" and "wild" meetings. But the tameness is a revealing fact about the UAW today. It is when factions, and splinters within factions, come into a convention, that vigorous floor action is to be expected. Each issue that comes up has a different constellation of support and of opposition; and any man or team may win on one issue and lose on another. In a sense, factionalism permits a more direct expression of the mass will because support is more likely to be formed around issues than around men. It is this situation that has made UAW conventions so openly democratic and that prevailed so markedly at the 1946 convention, when Reuther was elected president but his opponents captured all the other national posts and the International Executive Board. The 1947 convention, in contrast, was neither steamrollered by a machine, nor fragmented by factions. The Reuther rule is now in the party coalition stage.

The political fights back of the formation of this coalition had gone on all over the auto workers' territory for months before the convention. Ultimately, Reuther managed to get the support of some five major elements: the trade union progressives, who see him as an honest and effective unionist; the political followers, generally of socialist or independent radical persuasion; those Catholics who are organized in the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (though George Addes is himself a practicing Catholic); simple red-baiters; and a small number of the inevitable opportunists. This is the coalition that defeated the curious Addes caucus, which was composed largely of

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three groups: the more conservative trade unionists, who saw Reuther's talk as "pie in the sky" and who are sentimental about the old-timers with whom they were associated in the days when the union was built; the machine politicians, pork-choppers, and opportunists, contingents which were naturally larger in the old majority than in the new one; and the Communists, who acted as the party whips of the Addes coalition and as an ideological influence within the union.

The pre-convention campaigning by the Reuther group was a bold operation. The Reuther men went into those locals in which the enemy was most strongly concentrated. They accepted debates, and, as is now clear, they won them. They fought on local issues and on local grievances. There were apparently very few "deals" made, though there was probably one in one region. On the whole, however, Reuther did not trade specific jobs to specific people in return for support; rather, it became clear that the smashing of the old machine would open up jobs.

But basically the election was not a struggle between two machines composed of various elements. In a very real sense, Reuther's victory represents a democratic rank-and-file revolt against a disintegrating machine. To be sure, he managed to inherit the push and drive of the rank-and-file caucus, which reached its climax in 1943 and 1944. This caucus was an unstable movement led by non-Communist leftists who attempted revolt against the officials of the union. Reuther's rise is in large part due to his ability to capture the support of this quasi-spontaneous movement. It was Reuther who demanded that the books of a great corporation be opened so that a public relationship between wages, prices, and profits might be established. And, like so many other pivots of power within this union, it was primarily one strike which enabled Reuther to capture the workers' political imagination: the General Motors strike of 1945, the most significant labor action of the postwar period.

There is no question that the general anti-Communist mood in the country formed an impressive backdrop for the successful campaigning of the Reuther men. Yet the errors and ineptitude of the Addes caucus were perhaps as important in Reuther's victory as his own positive accomplishments or program. These stupidities are too numerous even to list; they include the high-handed merger with the Communist-controlled Farm Equipment Workers' union attempted last spring, and the unbelievable smears on Reuther put out by a hired press agent. One can only assume that the Addes group had a basic contempt for the intelligence of the rank and file. At the same time, the international representatives who are supposed to service the locals, were in many instances inefficient apparatus men.

The impression that a Communist clique is a highly efficient machine is again shown false by the UAW experience. By now the selective process operating at each turn and twist of the party line has weeded out most of the really good men the Communists once had, leaving behind a cadre of inferior people. And these could not give the members satisfaction by merely servicing grievances, by slowing down attempted speed-ups, and so on. Reuther, on the other hand, could say with some justification that he couldn't get the job done as president because of the obstructive tactics of the Addes group. The fact that the "mechanical majority" on the board did obstruct Reuther at every point was seen by many auto workers as unfair.

Democracy in a labor union is a delicate balance between the machine on the one hand and factional splinters on the other. The UAW's history has been one of factionalism, some of the bitterest in American labor history, but now it is led by a unified majority coalition. The victory of the present coalition is amazingly clean-cut: men with ideas and with untied hands have come into power.

The men around Reuther are fully aware that the meaning of their victory lies in its effects inside the union, in its effects on the relations of the union with the auto in-

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dustry and its relations with the rest of the CIO and other unions, and on the role of the union in the larger American economy and in American politics.

Inside the union, the auto workers will undoubtedly get better union service, and many duplications of office will be eliminated by the unification that will occur down the line. The need to service the rank and file in a purely union way is so urgent that Reuther will think hard before making merely patronage appointments. The big job turnover now going on in the UAW is needed to make it function more effectively and efficiently as a union, besides serving an important political function.

But when does unity become domination? It may be that the "unity" will result in the building up of a machine which might speak democratic and radical phrases, but will operate for its own entrenchment and, to ensure that, limit itself to pure and simple material gains for its membership. I do not believe that such a trend is likely in the UAW:

(1) The solid Reuther man in a hotel room with solid Reuther men all around, talks like this: "You guys all know how hard I've worked for the redhead; for five years now." And the others nod without smiling, "Yes, Joe, you sure have worked." "But," continues Joe, "if he gets out of line, I'll personally throw the bastard out next year." In defeating the "mechanical majority," as he called it, Reuther has by no means created another one. Among the lieutenants there are many who just won't accept the role of being anybody's boy, nor the role all too usual among American trade union leaders: the broker of power between the business classes and the government, on the one hand, and the rank and file on the other.

(2) Any labor leadership has to pay off to the membership in order to stay in power. For a while Reuther can pay off simply by good administration within the union, and by supplementary actions such as the tie-in with co-operative purchasing, which is on the one hand a means of involving apathetic members in union affairs, but also provides considerable economic relief. But the membership of the UAW is far too sophisticated economically to believe that another nickel in the pay envelope or a set of co-ops is enough. They know, and the key ideologists in the Reuther camp will continue to educate them on the point, that today some sort of sound relation between profits, prices, and wages has to be established if they are to have a pay-off that means anything. And this means that the policies of the Reuther administration must go beyond pure and simple unionism and into the sphere of national economic policy.

(3) Reuther's own power does not rest upon a carefully built patronage machine, but upon the programs he has put out. The delegate buttons read "support the Reuther program," not just "support Reuther."

It may be said that Reuther's have been merely the tactics of a minority opposition seeking office, and now that he is in the majority he will fall into the more usual trade union means of power. I do not believe this is probable in view of the nature of his ambition, the character of his coalition, and the situation he is up against. His course will be to continue to enlarge the sphere of union activity.

The real threat to the UAW as a vanguard of the democratic Left in America comes less from developments inside the union than from the possible reactions of the auto industry. The industry men are unhappy about the Reuther victory, which for the first time presents them with a unified union administration. Knowing that Reuther has to pay off his members in one way or another, they expect intensified pressure from the union.

If they take a belligerent bust-em-up stand, they will get a belligerent union, and a show-down battle. If this should happen, industry generally would strongly back up the auto companies and many unions would in like manner support the UAW. In this kind of development, there is little likelihood the UAW will go conservative.

But it may well be that, after a limited

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period of Taft-Hartley toughness, of trying to weaken the union, the companies will take the line of the sophisticated conservative: to set up amiable management-labor cooperation and make material economic concessions in return for the union disciplining the rank and file; in effect, transforming the union into a personnel department for the industry. That might be the unconscious temptation of Reuther: to become a "human engineer" for some sort of state capitalism guaranteeing industry disciplined workers, and in effect, by drawing the teeth of the rank and file, making them easy prey to an American variant on the corporative set-up. This is indeed the temptation of many American labor leaders, and a far greater threat to labor than that presented by the policies of Tafts and Hartleys.

THE Reuther landslide may be viewed as a threat to Philip Murray, CIO's president, who while he endorsed Reuther's own candidacy did not explicitly endorse the Reuther slate. The UAW is twenty per cent of the total CIO membership. Murray's position as a broker of power in the CIO requires him to be openly enthusiastic only for men on top or obviously about to be. He cannot easily take the initiative, and cannot afford to antagonize the administration of an important union. But there is nothing to keep Reuther from taking the initiative. In the end, however, the effect of Reuther's victory upon other CIO unions will depend not so much upon maneuverings with their leadership as upon what Reuther is able to give his own members. This, it seems to me, is the very best kind of competition between labor leaders.

By the elimination of the Communists from their participation in power in the UAW, the Reuther landslide has greatly strengthened all the anti-Communists in the CIO. It strengthens James Carey's hand against his opponents, and it makes Murray more responsive to the pressure to act against the Communists. It helps break the monopoly of the Left that the Communists have tried so desperately to win. That is why it is so important that the Reuther attack was itself from the constructive Left, and not merely anti-Communist. The effect is probably clear to the automobile manufacturers, of whom it is said that they might prefer to bargain with the Communists rather than with Reuther.

Of the CIO's big three—steel, automobiles, and electricity—steel and automobiles are now anti-Communist. Reuther's victory is a dramatic climax of the anti-Communist trend in the CIO. In January 1947 some 41 per cent of all CIO members were in anti-Communist unions; in December 1947, the figure was 62 per cent.

With the weakening of the Communists as an important element of the left-wing forces in American unions, foreign policy loses its priority, and domestic political issues upon which there is a chance for meaningful action can now be discussed on their own merits, rather than on the basis of whether or not they conform to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

Reuther's own political line at the present time is in favor of a "basic realignment of political forces," and an extreme criticism of both major political parties as "two hodgepodges of contradictory elements." He is, however, against the formation of a new party now, for he believes that it would be "a sectarian affair without any chance to win." In his circle, however, the socialist tradition is strong, and individual leaders like Mazey would not hesitate to begin work for such a party immediately. The issue of a labor party may well be decided in the UAW. In the meantime it provides the most important arena for agitation for a labor party.

GIVEN Reuther's biography and ambition, I think it safe to say that he wants to do something for the American democratic Left as well as his own auto workers. His training and the character and training of the men around him are such that they combine honest trade unionism with a view of the labor union movement as the natural instrument for the economic liberation and political unification of the underprivileged.

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Moreover, they know that they form a center within the labor unions with which many homeless left-wingers identify, and they feel some responsibility to these people. They are already at the top of their own hierarchy: the union. Still young men, they are already in the same class of power as men twenty years older. Their energies will not be satisfied by mere unionism.

On February 22 of this year, in an address to the first annual convention of the Americans for Democratic Action, Reuther clearly indicated his lines of political attack. He said:

"In every reach of industrial activity, large corporations are making public decisions privately. We must end that. We must end the game of collective bargaining in the dark. Labor, management, and the consumer are partners in the national enterprise. Labor and the consumer are primary, almost identical. They must have access to the facts that hold the key to wise policy, to the equitable relationship of wages, prices, and profits. The time for unilateral action in these areas is past. We must create and apply new techniques for economic democracy, develop a new institutional framework that will make the large corporation responsible to the community, end the powers of monopoly, and bend bigness to the practices of abundance.

"We can plan, without throttling freedom. We can get off the treadmill of boom and bust, we can pull ourselves up into a new era of plenty without throwing political liberties overboard. We can raise our sights, draw a bead on tomorrow, and bring the good life down where ordinary folks can taste it. . . .

"Our watchword must not be: back to the New Deal, but forward from the New Deal."

The test of the UAW as the vanguard force in labor and in leftward politics is not only what these young men will do, but: (1) whether or not this union continues to generate a broad stratum of union-made intellectuals, and (2) whether or not these home-grown radicals will find or will be able to create channels upward to the executive board and downward and outward to the shop stewards and the rank and file. Such men are, in the end, the only guarantee that the UAW will be the vanguard union long enough to provide results, not only to its own members, but to all who hope for a radical shift in American politics.

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THE MONEYLENDER OF VENICE

In Shylock, a Different Play Struggles to be Born

JACOB SLOAN

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE is one of Shakespeare's poorer plays. It has three of his unique soliloquies, a lyrical love scene, a couple of vehement dramatic situations, and two strong characters in Shylock and Portia—but it never catches fire as a work of art. The reason is that Shakespeare, who certainly never saw a confessed Jew in England, and very probably never was in Italy in his life, gives us a Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* who is so complex that he destroys the comic unity of the play.

Shakespeare's comedies, it is true, are never simple; they abound in ambiguities and hard philosophic comments, generally in the ironic-pessimistic vein of Jaques in *As You Like It* ("All the world's a stage. . . ."). For the comic point, perhaps best communicated by the epigrammatic clown or fool, is the classic liberation of objectivity. It is as though the ludicrous motley gave the wearer license to stick a healthy finger through the interstices of the moral garb. The difference between the clowns in Shakespeare's comedies and those in his tragedies is mainly one of intensity—their functions are the same: to reveal the human rigidity behind the rich social folds.

This unconventional detachment is present in *Lear*, where the "poor fool" cryptically relates his master's senility to the lifelong constriction typical of a king's experience. It is true of Touchstone, Jaques' "motley fool," who, lounging in the free Forest of Arden, ridicules the fashionable sterility of melancholy:

> *And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,*
> *And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,*
> *And thereby hangs a tale. . . .*

But it is noteworthy that in *The Merchant of Venice* Launcelot Gobbo can mock his master, Shylock, only ineffectively, and then only on a class level. Shylock is vilified for being a hard master—but not to his face. Launcelot's only resource is flight, and the rear attack of helping Shylock's daughter to run off with a Christian.

For the comic element is in flight from Shylock, and the *Merchant* degenerates into a melodrama. Shylock cannot be faced on equal intellectual and moral terms. He can be hurt and subdued through force and chicanery, but not fundamentally converted, as Jaques and Lear were.

Nor is the failure of the play to be ascribed to Shylock's seriousness, or even to the distraction offered by the presence of a tragic center rivaling the comic. Other Shakespearian plays, too, contain important characters who are more profound than the play as a whole. Both Falstaff and Malvolio play roles somewhat similar to Shylock's. They, too, are butts; they, too, are rascals; they, too, win our sympathy by their falls from influence and authority, far disproportionate to their failings—but Falstaff and Malvolio help *Henry IV* and *Twelfth Night* to the realization of their comic intentions, as the pathetic elements in Charlie Chaplin and Sholom

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Aleichem join the humorous to produce a catharsis that may be termed comic. But Shylock prevents the fulfillment of *The Merchant of Venice.*

THE reason for the failure of the play is more fundamental even than Shylock's individual recalcitrance. It rests in the fact that Malvolio and Falstaff are natural types, the Fat Rascal and the Lean Hypocrite; they are sublimated extracts of identifiable humanity. But Shylock is no such unlimited natural figment; he is historically, temporally determined, and the imagination of the poet and the theater cannot compass him. Shakespeare could not and did not want to concentrate on the artistically difficult Jew. But his growing genius sometimes ran away with his intuitive sense of the limitations of art, and in this case he almost wrote another play—called, let us say, "The Moneylender of Venice"—instead of the play we know.

The problem Shakespeare faced was insurmountable. To fit Shylock into his play, Shakespeare had to dehistoricize him—that is, he had to universalize the pattern of the Jew current in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. On the surface this was not hard; he could, as he did, follow the simple expedient of employing two natural images that came easily to hand: Devil and Dog. These were abstractions so popular that even Shylock could use them in speaking of himself without seeming to do violence to his individuality. Like all of Shakespeare's *leitmotifs* they are also deeply apt—but in this case they are not comprehensive enough. For they are static expressions, too simple to describe a non-categorizable historical force such as the Jew, whose intricacy Shakespeare was forced by his own subtlety to recognize —which recognition disturbed the harmony of his comic concept. For Shylock's ultimate *non-convertibility* (one senses that he will turn marrano) is in direct contradiction to Shakespeare's comic catharsis. The audience is moved from revulsion to pity, but the experience is not traumatic, is not shocking, for it takes place on one level. There is no final insight into the meaning of human change, because there is no growth in Shylock, no vision of "green fields."

DOGS are commonly regarded as the cleverest of domestic animals. They perform useful functions as watchdogs and hunters, and frequently become very friendly. But, domesticated, they are under-the-table scavengers. Their instinctive nature carries them back to the cowardly, gregarious wolves—they are not to be trusted.

To medieval man, the Jew was such a dog. He was smart, and quickly absorbed new habits and adopted new masters. He willingly served as financial and commercial watchdog and hunter, a function no respectable Christian allowed himself because of the Church's taboo against the collection of interest. (In Moslem states the taboo was disregarded, just as the Mosaic and Talmudic taboo had fallen to disuse among the Jews.) Moneylending was a necessity for the Jew; his stay in Venice was dependent on his operation of public banks. The free banks, established at the instigation of the anti-Semitic Franciscans, proved failures.

But the Jew was, at bottom, not to be trusted. He was obdurately clannish—a lupine characteristic. There was a sterile masochistic contempt in his deliberate submissiveness. He could be owned, but not possessed. Some strange ancestral pride kept him aloof.

To the medieval mind, the Jew was a devil as well. He was devilishly shrewd, for one thing. There was no arguing with him; he could quote Scripture for his purpose, as Shylock does when he traces Jacob's slyness to superior acquaintance with the laws of nature. It was a source of gratification to Christians to be able to throw the Jew's own Daniel back in his face, for in official disputations the inevitable justification of Christianity was never the outcome of superior argument.

The Jew was often accused of aligning himself with the heretical Christian movements. During the 16th century, the blood accusations against the Jews initiated by the Catholic Church were a tactical attack, be-

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cause of Jewish implication in the Protestant Reformation.* In a sense, the trial scene in the *Merchant* is a reflection both of the pattern of blood-accusation trials and of the real issues behind them. It is more than fortuitous, almost symbolical, that Portia's conflict with Shylock should revolve around interpretations of the relationship of blood to flesh—i.e., the body of Jesus to the spirit of the Christ. Jews were denounced for inciting the conspiracy to take Christ out of Christianity. The Church was particularly sensitive about the large measure of idolatry and Manicheanism which it had absorbed, and which medieval Judaism self-righteously detested. The Jewish tradition of universal (lay) participation in religious ceremony, and, even worse, universal study of the body of the Torah, was viewed as a danger—and was. A medieval Church, founded on the delegation of religious authority and the solidarity of hierarchy, could not tolerate the disintegrating presence of a tradition of individual conscience.

An example of the perspicacity of the Church in this respect occurred during Shakespeare's own lifetime. When Simon Budny, a Polish Arian, translated the Bible into Polish in 1573, he worked directly from the Hebrew text for the Jewish Testament, and, under the same influence, produced a very critical translation of the New Testament. The name of Budny's Jewish teacher was known, as well as the influence of Italian Jewish rabbis upon Johannes Reuchlin, the German Reformation leader. The Church rightly feared and attacked the opening of access to the tradition behind Jesus. Shylock's "Hath not a Jew" speech is Shakespeare's appreciation of the Jew's consciousness of the doctrine of individual conscience —a doctrine that radically challenged the foundations of ecclesiastical uniformity.

Socially as well as religiously, the Jew was anti-Christ in the most essential sense, because he was nearest to Jesus, and, by his very existence, was a protest against the assimilation of Jesus into Christ. And, paradoxically, the Church could not completely exterminate this troublesome body, though it did not hesitate to declare war to the death upon Arians, Manicheans, and other Christian heretics. For the Jews were a living example of an ideal religious body, one in which the scales of faith and works were balanced. The disciples of Pelagius and Augustine were at odds within the Church during the Middle Ages, and the existence of the Jews was a stabilizing reminder that only a Church practicing both faith *and* works could endure. "By our holy Sabbath!" swears Shylock. This is not an authentic Jewish oath—but it is an amazing perception of Judaism. The Jew takes his oath on his institutions—a remarkable amalgamation of beliefs and practice!

The Jew was a devil for still another reason. Mephisto-like, the Jew came to the new Faust-man of the Renaissance, weary of the monastic library, and made him the classic offer of power through knowledge. The Jews had always been concerned with the basic sciences—the knowledge of self, anatomy, philosophy, and medicine, in which departments they were masters. The Jew-devil was pressing Faustus to burn again the topless towers of Ilium-Rome, offering in return the science and art of antiquity, in which he had never given up his share. *"Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint"*—it was the true Church that the "constantly denying spirit" was urging Renaissance man to repudiate.

Thus, economically, spiritually, socially, intellectually, in the medieval ideology which Shakespeare accepts in the *Merchant,* the Jew was a negatively polarized figure that threatened the positive pole of monolithic Christian feudalism, but without whom that same society would have been demagnetized. For the Jews were an element looking both ways—back to antiquity and forward to capitalism—whose ambiguous presence quickened medieval life.

In the evolving Renaissance, Cecil Roth writes, the Jews were to encounter, besides "widespread scepticism and cultural eclecti-

* See Jacob Shatzky, in *Yivo Blätter,* Winter 1946.

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cism, an undercurrent of sincere and sometimes fanatical religiosity." They would remain devil and dog, to this very day.

Our modern mythology has changed the images, but our attitude remains pretty much the same. The modern euphemism for dog is parasite, for devil, scapegoat. There is common recognition that these symbols are insulting, but not that they are inaccurate. Philo-Semitism is based on a need to defend the Jewish middle-class position in society by playing it down, through "objective" surveys, interfaith comings-together, attempts at finding syncretizations on the ideological level—all those activities that Maurice Spector calls "the taming of the Gentile." (No need is felt to defend the middle-class status of non-Jews.)

On the other hand, Jewish nationalism repudiates Jewish supra-nationalism, and the unhealthy middle position of the Jew in Galut, in favor of a return to a new idealistic secularism. However they may differ in analyzing the Jewish fate, philo-Semites and nationalists agree on one point: the classic Jewish role of dog and devil, social middleman and intellectual midwife, is played out.

But "The Moneylender of Venice," that unwritten play whose fragments lie in *The Merchant of Venice,* is concerned not with solving but with probing into the problematic relationship of the Jew to society. Shakespeare does more than vilify Shylock, and more than ennoble him (either would have been a bland categorization); he gives the gabardined Jew in this early play a fourth dimension such as only his later great tragic characters possess—and with a difference. It is the dimension of *self-awareness,* which, perhaps as much as ambiguous "sufferance," is "the badge of all our tribe."

It is not only the surface knowledge of election, the assumption of relative suffering for the sake of absolute salvation—it is the hourly, momentary recognition that, while humiliation is unavoidable, if necessary, the certain Messiah is not to be pressed, "though he delay."* It is the ability to abstract a new dimension, which Einstein has not been the only Jew to possess. In earliest Jewish history, Moses abstracted Jahveh from the desert of Sinai, and the Prophets abstracted him from the Jewish nation. And in modern times, Freud abstracted the unconscious from the psyche, Heine cosmopolitanism from the French Revolution, Kafka the Castle from K., Chagall the flying goat from the village, Rabbi Nahman Bratzlaver the saint from man, Trotsky the Revolution from Russia, Proust memory from existence.

For the theme of the unwritten "Moneylender of Venice" is not the same as the theme of *The Merchant of Venice.* It is not the victory of emotion over intelligence, New Testament mercy over Old Testament justice, the woman Portia over castrated Shylock. It is, rather, a theme that is hinted at in the recurrent philosophic image, as distinguished from the moralistic harangue, that runs through both plays—the *image of contradictions.* On the simplest level, it is the three caskets, whose gold, silver, and lead exteriors mask their contents. On another level it is:

So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceived with ornament. . . .
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

And on the third, the inner level, it is the confusion between pity and revulsion at the much reviled, sometimes pitied, never comprehended Jew. We are closest to Jessica, who runs off with her father's ducats and, for a monkey, gives away her father's turquoise, which (strange tenderness!) "I had of Leah when I was a bachelor." While we deplore her confusion, we can see her life at home, sober and self-castigating in the innermost circle of hell for youth, the tedious coldness. And we are most conscious of our modern identification with the weak child when she expresses her self-insight:

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me

* Maimonides, in his *Credo.*

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To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. . . .

The "manners" that Jessica is revolting against consist in the absence of *manner,* the sole concentration on *matter,* which is the world outlook of the fundamentalist whom Shakespeare so persistently lambasts in his plays. It is the new manner of the introspective individual, the self-concerned family, the destiny-conscious tribe, of the nascent middle class, that same middle class which title-seeking Shakespeare abhorred in the person of the Puritan, and which was to supply the seed for the new economic-psychological anti-Semitism.

And yet this vice of Shylock's, this god-awful and literally goddamned straitness, has other, obverse faces. They are not to be masked by all the merriment of Venetian festivals that he denied himself and that could abduct an ashamed child. And they are not to be wiped away by the pretty wit of a woman, twisting law against him in the fashion of that Talmud whose study was forbidden him; no, not by the massive state itself, which was liberal enough to fine him his religion in the spirit of Christian charity.

One of Shylock's unmasked faces is the face of a compassion that his daughter and her lover never dream of when they talk sentimentally of "Dido with a willow in her hand upon the wild sea banks. . . ."

Another is the face of an agony that weighs down every other character, making what Antonio declaims slander and Portia's "merciful rain" Sunday School patter.

The last is the face of humiliated love crying, "Jessica, Jessica!" And the slow reply of the superior man to his humiliators: "I am content."

EARLY in the Passover Haggadah we encounter a comment on the nature of the Jews' status in Pharaonic Egypt: they came as *gerim,* to "sojourn" and not to settle.

It does not matter whether this interpretation is historically correct, or whether it is one of many glosses inserted to counteract possible antagonism in illiberal Alexandria of the 2nd century against what might easily have been construed as an anti-Egyptian feast. We are not primarily interested in ritual murder accusations. (We have already alluded to the oblique reference in Shylock's trial to a typical Jewish blood accusation case during the Middle Ages.)

What is significant for us now is how the Jews have regarded themselves and been regarded by their neighbors, and why a great poetic genius could glimpse but not enclose them in his art. Perhaps the classical concept of the *ger,* or sojourner, will help.

The *ger* belonged to "a class of men who were personally free but had no political rights . . . the protected strangers."* Although there are frequent references to *gerim* in the Jewish Testament, it was only after the destruction of the Temple that the Jews saw themselves in that very status. They wished to keep a semi-independent position in respect to religion and society (the two went together); that is, the post-Exilic Jews aimed at keeping their Palestinian citizenship, so to speak, or, more accurately, their citizenship in a religion and society whose cult centered in Palestine, but which might be practiced, though incompletely, outside of the Land. They felt themselves to be really citizens of Judaism from birth, not citizens of Babylonia or Rome or Spain —and were regarded as such.

It is at this point that our tangent touches "The Moneylender of Venice." Why did Shylock's complexity trouble Shakespeare? Not because he is too deep, but because he is too many things at once; not that he is an impossible character—but that there are too many elements in him, and they do not cohere.

The proof lies in *Othello,* where we find Shylock's characteristics divided between two characters, each of whom is satisfactory as a unit. Othello himself is very like Shylock in many ways: the alien, the stranger, the victim of xenophobia, the powerful passion-

* Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites.*

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ate nature ruined because of his *differentness*—no motive but personal uneasiness toward Othello can account for Iago's actions.

Iago is the devilish, the shrewd, the revengeful, the unpardonable part of Shylock. Yet, where *The Merchant of Venice* fails, *Othello* is a success—the alien is real, the devil is real—and the tragedy is real.

For in *Othello* the alien and the devil are separate. The alien is strange, indeed, but he is no Jewish bogey-man—Othello is *too* strange for that; he is always an overwhelming curiosity, and somehow defenseless at the same time, his real home being elsewhere.

But Shylock is a resident alien, in Venice but not of it—a walking memorial of Jerusalem and the Holy Sabbath.

Iago is a tolerable devil, genuine but native-born, the worst of Italy's citizens. His speech is at home in the play and in the poet's mind, quick and supple and cynical, vital and amusing: "To suckle fools and chronicle small beer."

Iago is malicious and whole. There is none of the Jewish defensiveness about him; he will not even *seem* to be converted. He will have no part of the world he detests. Perhaps it is because he was incorrigible that it was obvious to Shakespeare that Iago had to succeed, while Shylock, whose deviltry was only circumstantial (he possessed no natural cloven foot, like Iago), could be overcome. As a result, Iago is expressed and Shylock repressed—and that makes all the difference in the art. "No man is poor save in wit," says the Haggadah. The poet described Shylock's wealth of self-consciousness, but he could not circumscribe the Jew as a whole.

For Shylock does not categorize easily. The moneylender of Venice refused to conform even to the roomy confines of Shakespeare's drama. Shylock is on our shelves, but he overflows them.

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THE MONTH IN HISTORY

VIOLENCE AND OVERTURN

Gandhi—Palestine and the UN—Czechoslovakia

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

Death of a Man

MOHANDAS GANDHI lay dead, and the world was a poorer place. He had embodied, as perhaps no other statesman had, mankind's will to an order based not on force, but on justice. At any time, and under any circumstances, his death would have brought a sense of immediate personal tragedy to hundreds of millions, in his own and other lands. True, one knew that at seventy-nine he had already survived three times the average span of life among his countrymen. Even his jesting statements that he would live to the age of a hundred and forty could not erase the consciousness that he, who had surmounted so many human frailties, was subject to the ultimate one. But though one might know that Gandhi must some day die, one could never fully accept it. For he was too much needed.

Yet even Gandhi's death, at a time when he seemed to stand almost alone as a bulwark against the outbreak of unchecked slaughter, was less terrifying than the manner of it. The death by an assassin's bullet of this man, who had sought no man's harm and every man's good, seemed to challenge the assumptions on which the existence of a rational society was possible, and to call upon every man to examine himself for the roots of the evil which had flowered and threatened the moral security of all. For Gandhi died because of his virtues, not in spite of them, and at the hands of one whom he had benefited, not injured. Nor was his assassin acting in the darkness of ignorance, for he was an educated man—as were those who devised Maidanek, and those others who defended lynching in the halls of the United States Congress. But, at the same time, Gandhi's life offered testimony to the power of love and truth. For without arms and in all humility, he had humbled the armed might of a proud empire. He had made his voice heard among fratricidal mobs, and they had desisted from mutual slaughter. He had been gentle with the weak and lowly, and stern with the exalted and those in the seats of the mighty, and both had loved and followed him. He had reached through prison bars to embrace his jailers, and had made them his friends and admirers. And his death was mourned, not only by those he had liberated and served, but by those from whom he had freed them.

The work of Gandhi, like that of any statesman, could not be fully judged until long after his death. How much of it would

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IN TIMES when the month-by-month march of events is of such a character as to give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the thankless but necessary task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM has had many years of experience as a news analyst, and brings to his work of appraisal here a rich store of knowledge in modern history and international affairs. The judgments expressed here are, of course, those of the writer, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

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stand, and how much be swept away, remained to be seen. So, too, did the extent to which it might be necessary in the light of the future to alter the direction of his building. But, whatever might come, he had never worked with methods which were in any measure self-defeating. And in this he was alone among the leaders of his time.

India after Gandhi

For the moment, Gandhi in death seemed even more powerful than he had been in life. The preachers of communal hate, against whom he had fought and who had been responsible for his death, shrank back before the force of the popular reaction to his murder. The secret armed societies which had been arousing and conducting internecine strife were outlawed by a hitherto hesitant government, and their leaders arrested. The leading communal groups, partly from fear of public resentment and partly because they were genuinely shocked by the realization of what their activities had led to, announced their voluntary dissolution or withdrawal from politics. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian Socialists, who had consistently fought against communalism, found themselves strengthened.

The struggle which Gandhi had conducted for Indian freedom was over, and he had lived long enough to know at least the triumph of that achievement. The struggle, even more absorbing to him, for human brotherhood, was still and would long be unwon.

The Arab League

In Palestine, the forces of a communalism similar to that against which Gandhi had fought, raged unchecked. (Indeed, the major groups which had carried on the propaganda of communal hate in India found in the Palestinian conflict a microcosm of their own. Thus Mohammed Ali Jinnah, whose Moslem League had precipitated the Indian clashes to serve its ends, pledged the support of Pakistan to the Arabs, as brother Moslems. And the Hindu Mahasabha, from whose ranks Gandhi's murderer had come, saw the Zionists as allies in the struggle against Islam and—alone among Indian groups—endorsed their aims.)

Others, too, saw the struggle in Palestine as a part of their own conflict. In particular, the Russians regarded it as an opportunity to undermine Anglo-American hegemony in a strategically vital area. And to many in the United States and Great Britain, the problem of how to consolidate the position of the Western powers in the Middle East, and to combat Russian infiltration, took precedence over all other considerations. These threads ran through all the debates, and all the measures taken or avoided, in regard to Palestine. In the case of Russia, such considerations of power politics had produced support first for the Mufti and then for the Zionists. In the case of the Western powers, they were inextricably intermingled with other very different considerations as well. It was this merger of incompatibles which was, in great measure, responsible for the inconsistencies and hesitations which had characterized Western policy on Palestine.

But if the clashing forces in Palestine often seemed little more than pawns of big power politics, they were also forces which had an independent existence of their own. Political Zionism had made its first entrance on the stage of history under the tutelage of the British, for whom it was an instrument of policy in the First World War. But it had soon demonstrated that it was a genie that could not be returned to the bottle with the same gesture which had evoked it. Once Britain's foster-child, political Zionism today had elevated Anglophobia almost to the rank of a basic principle.

Arab nationalism, similarly, had been encouraged by the powers for their own purposes, and at least some of its phenomenally rapid growth in the last quarter century could be traced to this fact. (It was perhaps this which had led Zionists—as well as others—to underestimate its real force and the depths of its roots in the Arab masses.) Today, however, it was a movement which might make alliances with one power or another, but could not be harnessed to any chariot. Nor was it, as events increasingly made clear, merely the instrument of a little clique of feudal rulers. True, the Arab princes were still, for the most part, able to ride the wave—as long as they were willing to go in its direction. When they attempted to defy it, however, they soon found themselves faced with the choice of giving in or going under. This was true even when they

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were acting in concert with one or another of the great powers. In Iraq, the British treaty, agreed to by Regent and cabinet, was defeated by popular resentment against the subordination to Britain which it appeared to entail. The cabinet of Premier Sayed Saleh Jabr was forced to resign, and the Premier himself to flee the country. As for Iraq's princely rulers, they had no choice but to accept the result of the revolution, or to join the Premier abroad. In Egypt, the time when an anti-nationalist government could have held power by force was long since past. Now, the King and his court politicians felt themselves constrained to compete with the Wafd opposition in demonstrating the intensity of their Arab—and Egyptian—nationalism. In Lebanon, those politicians who had attempted to ally themselves with the declining power of France rather than the rising force of nationalism had found themselves swept into discard.

Indeed, although Palestine was still the cement of the Arab League, and its most spectacular field of action, the League's activities in North Africa were perhaps of even greater potential importance. Here, it was in close contact with nationalist movements in Algeria, Tunisia, and both French and Spanish Morocco. Exiled leaders from all these countries frequented its headquarters and received moral and even occasional material support from it. The best known of these, of course, was Abd-el-Krim, hero of the Riff war against France and Spain, whose escape from French custody had been made possible by Egypt's readiness to grant him asylum. It was interesting to note that the Arab League appeared to accept him, rather than the Sultan of Morocco, as leader of the nationalist forces in Morocco. Perhaps this indicated that the leaders of the League believed he possessed more popular support in Morocco than did the Sultan; perhaps it was the result of a suspicion on their part that if it came to a showdown the young Sultan, despite his demonstrative nationalism, would hesitate to risk his position by taking the lead in outright rebellion against his French and Spanish "protectors." Whether they followed Abd-el-Krim or the Sultan, however, the people of Morocco were increasingly restive. Periodic riots in French Morocco had risen to a pitch not far short of rebellion at times; now in Tetuan, capital of Spanish Morocco, demonstrators defied Franco's terror on a scale which was still unthinkable in Spain itself. And Spanish governments had fallen, before this, because they could not hold Morocco.

The War in Palestine

But for the time being, whatever trouble Franco had to face in Morocco was fairly certain to come from the Moroccan people themselves, not from any assistance they would receive from the Arab League. For the latter had plans for Palestine which left it neither volunteers nor arms available for use in Morocco. As yet, the Arab states had committed only relatively small and poorly armed forces to the invasion—or, as the Arabs termed it, the defense—of Palestine. The British estimated the number of volunteers from other Arab states who had already entered Palestine at about 3,000. Zionists in Palestine thought that the actual number was about twice as great. Some estimates current in New York ran as high as 15,000. In any case, most of the invaders seemed as yet to have taken little or no part in the actual fighting, but to have distributed themselves through Arab Palestine to serve as stiffening for the indigenous population, and to set up a skeleton government and army for the day when the British left.

So far, too, Haganah was still able to point to the disproportion between its casualties and those of the Arabs as proof that its forces were far better trained and armed. But the superiority of Haganah's armament was clearly decreasing. The Arabs, who in the first two months of fighting had seldom had any weapons more effective than rifles, were now frequently equipped with machine guns and sometimes with mortars as well. It was generally believed that these weapons came from the armories of Syria and Lebanon. So far, there was nothing to indicate that the richer and better-armed states of the Arab League had actually sent either volunteers in any significant numbers or armaments. It seemed probable that they were biding their time until the British left, and would then supply both.

It was this prospect, rather than any present inferiority, which made Zionists so anxious to secure access to additional stocks of arms for Haganah, and to replace or supplement it by a formally organized militia

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before the termination of the mandate. They feared the arrival of airplanes from Egypt, tanks from Saudi Arabia and Iraq—and perhaps whole regiments of well-equipped soldiers from the Arab Legion.

For the moment, the embargo on the shipment of arms from the United States to the Middle East cut off one major potential source of supply from both Zionists and Arabs. But other sources would be available to the new states. Britain was bound by treaty to supply arms to the Arab states, and it did not seem likely that any precautions she might take would prevent such arms from reaching the Arabs in Palestine. And Russia, whose oil had fueled Mussolini's planes in Ethiopia and Spain, was no more averse to supplying both sides from her own stocks and those of her satellites than she had been then. Likewise, both the Arab League and the Zionists were said to be negotiating with Czechoslovakia for the products of the Skoda works.

Thus there seemed little prospect that a shortage of arms on either side would cause any notable reduction in the present rate of something over a hundred deaths a week in the civil war, even while the British remained. And in some circles there was talk of a rate of a thousand a day, once the restraining influence of the British was gone.

Conciliation and Enforcement

EVERY day made it clearer that, if bloodshed on a terrible scale was to be avoided, the United Nations would have to take steps either to enforce the decision in favor of partition, or to revise it. The latter approach was implied in a wireless message from Dr. Judah L. Magnes to the *New York Times*. Dr. Magnes declared:

"In discussions of the Palestine question, it seems to be taken for granted that the Council can provide for the security of Palestine only through dispatch here of armed forces.

"But before using force the Security Council must first of all, in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter, call upon parties to a dispute to 'seek solution by negotiation, enquiry, conciliation, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means of their own choice.' In this regard the Council has had real success in Indonesia. . . .

"Why should not some similar procedure, with appropriate modifications, be tried as a first measure in reference to Palestine? There has been sufficient trouble here, and who knows what suffering and sorrow the morrow might bring? . . . Arabs have been aggressors. Jews have put up stout defense. But defense soon becomes 'active' and we are now confronted day by day with reprisals on one side and on the other. . . . It comes within the prescribed functions of the Council to seek first of all a solution of this conflict through 'peaceful' means of their own choice.

"It is not yet too late. There are still many Jews, Arabs, Christians and Moslems who are eager for a great concerted effort at conciliation and cooperation.

"The first need in the Palestine situation is for a truce. Will not the Council invite the Arabs and Jews to lay down their arms so that the Council may have an opportunity of canvassing possibilities of mediation and conciliation?"

The response of Zionist leaders, and of their political advocates, was to denounce any talk of compromise and to repudiate all "so-called moderates." They demanded the full Assembly plan, and called for the immediate arming of a Jewish militia and the creation of an international force to supplement and assist it.

If such a force was to be constituted, action at Lake Success was overdue. When, on November 29, the Assembly adopted the Partition Report, it already knew that Britain would be surrendering the mandate on May 15. It knew, too, that the Arabs were determined to resist the "solution" which it was adopting. If an international force was to be formed for the purpose of implementing the Assembly's decision, five and a half months hardly seemed more than an adequate time—particularly since there was not even an approach to agreement on the constitution of such a force. Yet the Partition Commission permitted half that time to elapse before, on February 16, it finally "decided to refer to the Security Council the problem of providing that armed assistance which alone would enable the Commission to discharge its responsibilities on the termination of the mandate."

Certainly it was easy for the Commission to demonstrate that, if partition were to

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work, it would have to have the support of an international force. The Commission pointed out that the security situation was steadily worsening, and that from the beginning all indications had pointed to this development. It cited the "organized efforts by strong Arab elements inside and outside Palestine to prevent the implementation of the Assembly's plan of partition and to thwart its objectives by threats and acts of violence." It added that "certain elements of the Jewish community in Palestine continue to commit irresponsible acts of violence which worsen the security situation, although that community is generally in support of the recommendations of the Assembly."

The Commission made it clear that it did not regard the provisions in the Assembly's partition plan for militias in the Jewish and Arab states as an adequate answer to the problem of enforcement. While declaring its intention to make every effort to seek the cooperation of the Arabs of Palestine, the Commission declared: "Under the present circumstances . . . the Commission would not be able to select and establish in the proposed Arab state a Provisional Council of Government which would act 'under the general direction of the Commission' and would at the same time enjoy sufficient authority and popular support to function effectively. It will be equally impossible . . . to establish in the Arab state an armed militia over which the Commission is to exercise 'general political and military control.' "

The Commission went on to say that the refusal of the mandatory power to permit the formation of a militia for the Jewish state before the termination of the mandate would make the security problem of that state much more difficult. It also indicated a more fundamental limitation to the usefulness of such a militia, asserting that: "The militia of the Jewish state . . . can, however, be responsible only for the security of that state, and it would be contrary to the Assembly's plan if a militia were to be used on the other side of the border for preventive or retaliatory action, however necessary such action might appear to be." Here, its point of view was directly opposed to that of David Ben Gurion, who a week before had declared: "We shall reply with force, not only in the Jewish areas of Palestine but in the Arab areas and in those countries where Arab bands are concentrating."

The Commission also saw no possibility of depending on the militia of the Jewish state in the city of Jerusalem, declaring that this "would not only be contrary to the plan of the General Assembly but would inflame passions and might provoke religious war." And it stated that to permit the commission delimiting the boundaries of the two states to work under the protection of the militia of one "obviously would not be considered by the Commission." And it warned that: "If, prior to the termination of the mandate, the policy of the mandatory power should not permit the formation of the militia envisaged in the Assembly's plan, it may be taken for granted that the armed organizations in the two communities will continue to pursue their clandestine recruiting, with the result that on the termination of the mandate more or less disciplined and unified underground forces will abruptly emerge in the guise of security forces and will probably be arrayed against each other in organized combat, a development which was certainly not contemplated in the resolution of the General Assembly." It was difficult to see, however, in what way this eventuality would be avoided by permitting the underground forces to assume the guise of security forces *before* the termination of the mandate, as some were actually suggesting.

The Theory of Enforcement

The Commission, and others who saw implementation of the partition plan by an international army as the only possible way out, held that the prestige and future value of the United Nations were at stake. Thus the Commission asserted: "A basic issue of international order is involved. A dangerous and tragic precedent will have been established if force, or the threat of the use of force, is to prove an effective deterrent to the will of the United Nations."

Unfortunately, however, it could be held that there already existed ample precedent for the forcible nullification by both member and non-member states of the decisions of the General Assembly. That body had set up the Balkan and Korean commissions in precisely the same manner as it had set up the Palestine Commission, and by much

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larger majorities. It had charged them with specific duties. But the Balkan Commission had been successfully defied by the governments of Yugoslavia, Albania, and Bulgaria, all of whom had gone so far as to bar it from their territory. And the Korean Commission had been prevented by the Soviet authorities from entering the northern half of Korea—an area in which Russia did not even claim sovereign rights. Again, the Union of South Africa had ignored decisions of the Assembly in regard to its treatment of its Indian inhabitants and its administration of Southwest Africa. If, after all this, the UN still had enough prestige for the Palestine issue to be a threat, it was even conceivable that it might survive failure there, too.

It was also suggested that the United Nations would not necessarily suffer a defeat of the first magnitude if, on re-examining an Assembly recommendation arrived at on the basis of certain assumptions, it should find these assumptions erroneous and revise the decision. And perhaps the basic assumption of the entire partition scheme had been that it would be practically self-enforcing. Whether there had ever been any reason, other than the difficulty of devising an agreed method of enforcement, for arriving at this conclusion, was beside the point. The fact remained that this assumption had been accepted and acted upon and was every day proving itself more incorrect.

The Practice of Enforcement

Apparently, the United States, when it supported partition, had not done so with the expectation that it would require the kind of armed enforcement that was now clearly needed. On the other hand, it was morally indefensible to permit the situation to degenerate into mass slaughter. It was the merging of these two considerations that was in all likelihood behind the insistence of Warren R. Austin, U. S. delegate to the Security Council, that an armed force be limited to the preservation of peace and have no part in the enforcement of partition.

It was suggested in some quarters that this would still permit the creation of a force which would preserve the peace while the Palestine Commission carried out the partition resolution. While Mr. Austin's words did not appear to make this interpretation impossible, they gave little substantial ground for reaching it.

Perhaps more important, however, than the precise relation of the preservation of peace to the enforcement of partition, was the question of whether there would actually be any force available to do either. The perspective here did not give grounds for optimism. For the procedure suggested by Mr. Austin involved further delay—and even that procedure had not been agreed on, and would not without consideration of other proposals and further debate.

Meanwhile it was doubtful whether Zionists fully understood the implications which the sending of such a force would have for their position. It seemed at least probable that the existence of an international force would require the complete subordination to it of the militia of the Jewish state, and would give that body little scope for independent action. Certainly any international force would feel itself in duty bound to prevent, so far as lay within its power, the type of "aggressive defense" which formed so important a part of Haganah's current tactics. And conflict with the Irgun and Sternists could scarcely be avoided by it, if they persisted in their present policy, and there was no sign whatsoever that they intended to change. Again, the British had permitted defensive operations by Haganah in the city of Jerusalem. But since the presence of any partisan armed groups within that city was specifically forbidden under the Assembly plan, this offered another source of potential trouble.

At the same time, it was not altogether clear exactly what the Commission hoped to accomplish with the aid of its army, if it got one. If it merely planned to assist the militia of the Jewish state in defending the boundaries of that state and preventing internal disorder in it, its task seemed practicable, though probably long drawn out. But if it hoped also to set up a friendly government within the territory of the Arab state, or to create a functioning economic union, or to establish harmony in the city of Jerusalem, more than force seemed requisite. Hence even the creation of an effective implementing force would not be adequate to carry out the partition resolution if the Arabs remained hostile and non-cooperative.

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Palestine in Washington

Whatever aspects of the problem of implementation might still remain doubtful, one thing was certain. The Red Army's newspaper, *Red Star,* was barking up the wrong tree when it charged that the United States was assembling forces in the Mediterranean preparatory to "invading" Palestine. Nothing was farther from the wishes and thoughts of American statesmen than the dispatch of American forces to Palestine. Nor was this only a consequence of the fear, prevalent in the Defense and State Departments as well as elsewhere, that any further involvement on the part of the United States would make the destruction of American oil installations in the Middle East almost inevitable. Important as this prospect undoubtedly was in the minds of many, there was also the fear, among both government officials and American Jews, that United States army casualties would have implications for the position of Jews in America that neither was anxious to contemplate. This would be true even if American soldiers were killed by Arabs while "defending Jewish interests"; but what if, as would be almost inevitable, some were killed by the Irgun and the Sternists?

It was the fear of the effects of the "Jewish vote," actually or allegedly placing Palestine aspirations over American interests, that led to the call in various quarters for bi-partisan agreement to take the Palestine question out of American politics. But there were far too many American politicians of both major parties who had made "playing politics with human misery" their stock in trade for this policy to have much chance of success.

From another quarter, too, every effort was being made to exploit the emotions of American Zionists for political ends. The Communist party and Henry Wallace were laying it on with a trowel, and for the moment very profitably. Political observers agreed in finding this one of the chief factors in the victory of the American Labor party candidate, Leo Isacson, in a special Congressional election in the Bronx. True, Isacson's Democratic and Liberal party competitors attempted to compete with him in protestations of pro-Zionism. (This was especially true of the Liberal party candidate, Dean Alfange, a leading figure in various pro-Zionist organizations. That did not prevent Isacson's supporters, however, from charging that the campaign of Alfange was financed by King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia!) But they were limited in what they could promise by the fact that they were campaigning as supporters of the Administration. Isacson and his stump speakers such as Henry Wallace, on the other hand, needed only to denounce. Perhaps the high point of this campaign was Wallace's charge that President Truman "still talks Jewish but acts Arab." (The newspapers reported that Wallace had said "acts Aryan." But Wallace—who has seldom opened his mouth in the presence of the press without finding subsequently that he has been embarrassingly "misquoted"—corrected this subsequently to "acts Arab.") As for the Republican candidate, it seemed apparent when the totals were published that only Arabs in the district had voted for him.

Revolt in the South

THE defection of New York and California votes to Wallace might quite conceivably cost Mr. Truman the election in November. But its long-term effect on American politics seemed likely to be less than that of the increasing division between the Democrats of the North and those of the solid South. The fact that the revolt of the Southern Bourbons appeared to be turning into a regular quadrennial event, and that in 1940 and 1944 it had petered out by election day, was apt to obscure its real importance. It was just possible that there was a limit to the length of time that the Ku Klux Klan and Northern liberals could be expected to pull in double harness. If the liberals did not object, the Klan did.

This year, the revolt was precipitated by President Truman's special message to Congress on civil rights. In this, he called for the implementation of many of the proposals for the elimination of racial discrimination which had been offered by his Committee on Civil Rights in November. Negro leaders pointed out, however, that while the President asked Congress for legislation on such subjects as a permanent FEPC, he had not wiped out discrimination in the army and navy, where it was a matter of administrative discretion. Some of them pointed out that even Northern states were forced to maintain Jim Crow militias, and that the

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army had only grudgingly permitted New Jersey an exception when it had amended its constitution to include an absolute ban on discrimination or segregation. These things were indisputable, despite the President's formal directive to eliminate discrimination from the armed services "as rapidly as possible." But they failed to reconcile the unreconstructed South.

Most violent of the rebels was Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi, who proposed that the Southern states instruct their electors to vote for a Southern candidate for President, so as to throw the election into the House of Representatives, where each state would have only one vote. A similar movement had started in Mississippi in 1944, and had received substantial support in Texas and Louisiana. However, the move miscarried in all three states. In Texas, where a relatively large part of the population voted, a rank-and-file revolt swept the secessionists out of control of the party. In Louisiana, the remnants of the Huey Long machine rallied to the defense of party unity, and the rebellion was squelched. And in Mississippi, the late Senator Theodore G. Bilbo saved the state for the New Deal.

Now, however, Bilbo was dead and Mississippi was again in doubt. But there seemed little chance that any of the other Southern states, except possibly South Carolina, would consider going to the length of withholding electoral votes in November. What several of the Southern organizations did announce their intention of doing, however, was withholding from the national organization any share of the funds collected at their local Jefferson-Jackson day dinners. This was a gesture which made sense in terms of keeping the boys at home well-fed, without seriously jeopardizing their chances of continuing to eat adequately during the next four years if Truman were re-elected.

However, if Truman lost the election, much of the Southern rebellion might begin to take a permanent form. The South was still held to the Democratic party—despite its disapproval of the racial egalitarianism advocated by Roosevelt and fought for by Truman—by the power of federal patronage. But if the Democrats were to lose control of the federal government, it seemed altogether likely that a more realistic political alignment would soon develop both nationally and within the South. There was no guarantee that such a realignment would make life more comfortable for minorities.

The Homeless

If the civil rights legislation recommended by the President seemed to have little chance of getting past the almost certain filibuster which it faced, the Stratton bill was generally regarded as likely to pass this year. Even without it, however, the United States was expected to admit more displaced persons than any other country in the course of the coming year. (The great majority of these—like the great majority of all those in the displaced persons camps—would of course not be Jews.) To assist in the resettlement of an expected 375,000 displaced persons in the course of the coming year—75,000 in Palestine, 100,000 in the United States, and 200,000 in all other countries put together—the International Refugee Organization had allocated $56,000,000 of its $155,000,000 budget. But this allotment, some $160 a person, seemed little for the need.

Moreover, it seemed regrettably likely that the supply of displaced persons would for some time continue to outstrip the demand. This was true especially of those who had fled their native lands for political reasons. *Gleichschaltung* was going on apace in the countries of Eastern Europe, and even rigid police control of the frontiers seemed unlikely to stop the flow of refugees in the near future. In Hungary, where a rank and file revolt in the Social Democratic party had a few months before threatened to take control from the leaders who had made it an appendage of the Communists, it was now suddenly announced that all those leaders who had opposed Communist domination had "resigned" from their party and government posts. In Bulgaria and Rumania, the puppet parties which had given the Communist regimes of those countries the appearance of "united fronts" were now being officially absorbed into the Communist party. At the same time, other organizations which had retained any trace of independence were being similarly brought into line. Thus, the Rumanian Government dissolved the executive board of the Federation of Rumanian Jewish Communities and installed a new—and Communist-led—one.

In one country of Eastern Europe, how-

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ever, democracy seemed to be dying hard. When the Communist Minister of the Interior of Czechoslovakia began to dismiss all non-Communist policemen, all the other parties—which together still possessed a majority in Parliament—joined in protest. The non-Communist Minister of Justice, furthermore, went so far as to expose the participation of the Ministry of the Interior in an attempt to hush up the illegal acquisition of arms by Communist groups. The response of the Communists was to seize all government offices by armed force. They still maintained the façade of a multi-party government, assisted by the capitulation of most Social Democratic party leaders and President Benes. But the end seemed near.

Life for the Jews—and others—in Eastern Europe did not seem likely to be altogether peaceful for some time to come. But, unfortunately, as matters stood today, they seemed to have little more chance of finding a solution to their problems elsewhere than they did at home.

ATOMIC BOMB

MILTON KAPLAN

DEEP in our fear we think we will escape
Event, for we have wound our days around
Us till we are inviolate: cocooned
By time and bandaged fleshly out of shape
We are too well disguised to die, though one
By one our brothers topple, meagre prey
Gnawed quickly naked to residual bone.

We grieve the brother but we shrink intact
And separate, refusing to betray
Our hiding place, and keeping lonely watch
With beady eye and swivel neck to catch
The deviation in our tight design
That flickers innate danger so we can back
Into the fibrous ball we were before.
We are afraid: we know: the very core
Of our own immortality is fear.
Admission saves us from the cultured whine
Of conscience, and we wipe an honest tear.

We know that death will come to us, we say
With philosophic resignation. *Alas,*
Poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio (and they
Will know us too), but in our concave glass
We split in two and see our twin stretched dead
With candles at his feet and at his head
Guttering, while we look on and childishly
Applaud the cosmic pathos of the scene.

Never before have so many dead men reached
To tear the summer from our muffled brain
And claw us conscious to a season bleached
With danger; still we huddle in our green-
Lapped darkness, wintering a hermit peace
In vigilance. Event will never trace
The puzzling scent of our identity
To stalk our powers till we stagger blind
And childless, tripping over raveled days
To fall to carrion.

No, even when
The focus narrows to the final point
That penetrates the insulated mind
And strips our consciousness of all pretense
To leave us cowering naked, face to face
With imminence, desperately we crawl
Backwards on hands and knees with shrill lament:
Not now! till arched against the ticking wall,
Pointing the others out, separately
We shriek in unison: *Not me! Not me!*
Not me!

MILTON KAPLAN's poetry has appeared in *Poetry, New Republic, Partisan Review,* and various other magazines. His poem "The Knife" was published in the February 1947 COMMENTARY.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

I REMEMBER TULSA

The Shul My Grandfather Built

GRACE GOLDIN

WE HAD quite a Simchas Torah in Iowa City last year. The celebration of our "rejoicing over the Law" took place at night, of course—everybody had to be at work the following morning. We are a congregation of grocery owners—how better celebrate Sukkoth than among stacks of Iowa apples and squashes?—but running a grocery all day doesn't dampen Jewish fervor at night after the store closes. Quite the contrary—though the spirit is not what it used to be. The mothers worry about the children staying up too late, with school tomorrow. Once upon a time, when the men of this Yiddish-speaking generation were younger, they did the *kazatsky* on Simchas Torah. Now they import a *hora* from the university crowd. But how they can drink and sing!

There must have been a lot of sleepy children in school next day, because the big doings went on until ten forty-five and later. At nine-thirty the occasion ceased to be an aim in itself for the youngsters and became a test of endurance, which they found even more delightful. At ten-thirty little Shirley, three years old, rendered "Ani Maamin" in an off-key soprano from the *shulchan* [lectern].

All in all, it was the kind of Simchas Torah my friends in New York go from shul to shul trying to find.

WE OUT here in Iowa are not offered much choice of shuls. Either God deserts us utterly and drops us shul-less in the middle of the prairie (as happens often enough) or for some merit of our ancestors we are granted a man like Mr. M. I cannot decide whether he would like to see his name in print or not. Well, perhaps he would. Mr. S. Markowitz, then, is our chazan. He is big-time stuff—professional. He was once offered a good round sum to sing to the Jews of Rock Island over Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. He came home after the holidays so desolately homesick that we have been gladdened by his presence in Iowa City every Rosh Hashana since.

Mr. Markowitz runs a coal and oil company, but that is not his real business. You see him as he really is, doing the work God gave him to do, at Kol Nidre services and at Neilah [concluding service on Yom Kippur]. He has the temperament of a big-town chazan—and the voice; but what impresses you most is his fervor as he stands before the open Ark. There his great talent emerges—a talent for throwing himself into God. He is no more sincere, perhaps, than the religious poet who, pouring out his heart to the in-

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IN AMERICA, the story goes, anything can happen. In this case, a devout Jew struck oil and, instead of being satisfied with gold-plated telephones or marble bathtubs, decided to build himself a private synagogue. His granddaughter, GRACE GOLDIN, here recalls her childhood adventures in this synagogue. Mrs. Goldin was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She was graduated from Barnard College and has contributed to the *Jewish Frontier, American Poet, Reconstructionist,* and many other magazines. She is the wife of Dr. Judah Goldin, associate professor in the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa, and is the mother of two children.

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effable, still keeps his eye on untidy prepositions and ragged meters. Mr. Markowitz is aware of the effect every cadence has upon you. Yet as he *davens* in his white chazan's hat, his back to everybody but the Lord, he is at the same time in the empyrean.

This Simchas Torah he was at the very top of his form. He has trained the whole congregation as his chorus. There are only about three Jewish families in Iowa City anyway—everybody has married into one of them, and all the children are first and second cousins. We had a family party with trimmings—apples and candles for the children—the candles lit the first time around: afterwards we blew them out. Mothers, I'm sure, must have been quite as terrified of burning down the Altneuschul in Prague.

This year's crop from the university gathered round Mr. Markowitz. Leo, from the Law School, looked as pale and pious when he laughed and beat his hands—who would expect to find this in Iowa City?—as he had looked all day on Yom Kippur standing continually propped against the slightly peeling wall. Our shul itself is a bit disheveled; one shoulder strap of the white curtain over the Ark hangs broken, and the women have almost talked the back benches smooth. I am a little afraid, though, of the new shul that our townspeople are planning to build. I am afraid they will stand in awe of it, and then the younger generation might take over. And that would mean that decorum might win out, and the pepper and salt of Iowa City Judaism be lost forever—as I fear it will be anyway with the passing of its founders.

Ours is only a corner of Judaism—not a very clean corner either—but a genuine corner. No one can doubt that who has seen Mr. Markowitz before the Ark, or heard his singing from among the whisky bottles on Simchas Torah. . . .

THAT evening I kept thinking of the other small mid-Western community where we lived for a number of years (let it rest nameless, but not forever). That congregation lives for me in a single symbol—its Torah. Yes, though they believed in ultra-Reform (and had heard nothing of the change of heart since the Pittsburgh Platform), they did possess one Torah, a little object approximately the size of the scrolls of prophetic books—*neviim*—that we used to carry about on Simchas Torah when we were children. They kept the Torah clothed in a white satin robe held together with a girdle, an actual girdle that fastened down the middle with a number of hooks and eyes. Every year the same two men of the congregation, chosen for rectitude, marched at a signal to the front of the Temple, where their Torah stood housed in a pointed, shoulder-high Ark. The signal was: "Who shall ascend to the mountain of the Lord, and who shall stand in His holy place?" It was a sort of accolade upon the business dealings of the two individuals. For their mercantile undertakings they perhaps deserved to be cited yearly; for their Jewishness, they deserved just the kind of Judaism they got.

The first year we lived there—after which we made an awful row about it—we worshiped on Yom Kippur in a borrowed church with a great cross, a black cross on a red velvet field hanging just where the *bimah*—platform—should have been. The *bimah* in that cold and marble vault stood to the left, slightly elevated, carved and also marble, with Gothic writing around its rim: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God." I stared at that sentence all through Yizkor one year until I cried as bitterly as the mourners.

It was a revelation to visit the Jewish corner of the cemetery of that town. The ancestors' names one discovered on the tombstones of all the well-known Episcopalian families! Some of their children still gave to the United Jewish Appeal "in memory of Father." Others no longer chose to acknowledge even that tenuous link.

The year we arrived my husband made an attempt—probably the first in the congregation's history—to read the portion of the week out of their little Torah. He unhooked its covering and tried to roll it over to the proper section, but the Torah, so rudely forced, immediately tore in two. My husband hastily gathered the two scrolls together, bound them with their girdle from bottom hook to top, and so far as we know that Torah has never since been disturbed.

That was the congregation whose high point every year was Yizkor, the memorial service, on Yom Kippur afternoon. We adjourned for lunch on Yom Kippur promptly at noon and the members would come over to us solicitously: "Aren't you eating *any-*

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thing? Do you feel all right?" And Mrs. T. would come over, her head on one side, shaking sorrowfully: "You're looking so well, *poor* thing!" Not knowing what to do with ourselves until three o'clock, we paid our annual Yom Kippur calls at lunchtime. Our friends learned, when we came, to hide the welcome-box of candy. At three we reconvened to read enlightening spiritual selections from the Hymnal. We read for an hour, taking turns: then Yizkor.

Autumn light fell through the stained-glass windows; leaves crossed the open spaces of blue sky, leaves like chips of spinning yellow glass. And from the pulpit the names of the dead were read—just names, but they produced a powerful cumulative effect. Then the congregation came nearest to religion, though I hesitate to call it Judaism.

Sometimes the effect was unpremeditated. In that town there was a very extensive family named Bing, and apparently there were even more dead Bings than living ones. One Yizkor the rabbi read slips of names for the entire family, bunched together. One Bing after another, Bing Bing Bing.

ALL this brings me by strange and devious ways to my grandfather's shul, which for the first eight years of my life *was* Judaism to me.

My grandfather was an ordinary New York Jew, neither very rich nor very poor—or, if he was extraordinary, it was along the same lines as a number of other New York Jews. His wife's father was a rabbi. His own father, after struggling for years to bring twelve children and a business to a point where he could well abandon them, disappeared one morning leaving a note for the older children on the breakfast table: "I sailed for Palestine. Send Mama and the babies after me if you want."

My grandfather was a man of considerable Jewish and secular learning, self-taught. He also enjoyed writing verse. I do not know whether he would ever have left his family for Palestine: things turned out quite differently for him. The second of his four daughters married an oil man from Tulsa, Oklahoma (and points East European), and she moved out west with him.

It takes only one oil well to make or break a man. The *nagid*—rich man—of the present Tulsa community used to be our groceryman. He bought one day, instead of a stock of canned goods, a corner of a corner lot of an oil field. That was all he needed.

By exactly the same kind of purchase my grandfather, who had gone bankrupt in New York, moved to Tulsa and built himself one of the fanciest homes in town. Then he paid off his creditors—with compound interest fully covering the duration of the loans. I met one of those creditors twenty-five years later. He looked me over with profound attention and complimented me as only he could: "An apple never falls far from the tree," he said.

When the new house was built, it contained a shul. Naturally, if he makes that much money, what does a Jew do? The town shul was too far away to walk, but that was only an excuse. This was a God-given opportunity for my grandfather to rule his own shul: an autocrat, defining policies, outlining the order of prayer, compelling decorum, making those improvements in the service that every man on every board of directors yearns to bring about—all-powerful—and single-handed.

The shul took up one whole wing of the house. Nothing but a porch was above it, and when it was explained to me that nobody should stand above a shul and be able to look down upon it, I never went out on that porch but with fear and trembling. The room was beautifully proportioned, like the rest of the house—no one felt cramped for space because one wing of the house was given over exclusively to religious use. One entered at the back of the shul, from the garden, through a double glass door. On each side of the room were three long windows; on the men's side they looked out on the driveway, which was their hard luck: we women had the flower-beds and shrubbery. The *bimah* extended across the front third of the room, raised by three marble steps that also went clear across; and on those steps stood potted plants all year round. I realize now that someone must have watered them—but at that time, for me, they grew right out of the marble. On the High Holidays we had white flowers, and for weddings a greenhouse came indoors.

SHUL was separated from house by a double-door at the back of the *bimah*, to one side. It was such a door, I thought, as locks

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up only a shul or a safe. With the house side of the door open, and the shul part not yet, one stood between two worlds. Nowhere else does a door open into a door.

Sometimes we would enter the shul by the garden door, and sometimes we would come from the house and walk across the *bimah*. When that happened I invariably felt the faint giddiness of stage-fright, no matter how few were the faces looking up at us.

The ceiling of my grandfather's shul was decorated with a repeating design. I don't know what architects call it—it was a kind of double square letter "c" going on from one "c" to the next until, following them overhead around the room, one fell into a sort of trance. I heard my first Hebrew—long before I could read—to the rhythm of architectural patterns, and one phenomenon became related to the other.

But the chief delight of our shul was its silver—Bezalel School work. The Torahs carried bells, one heard them tinkling. And since for the first seven years of my life I was near-sighted without knowing it, breastplates and crowns seemed but a great brightness to me, briefly visible when they came round to be kissed, but otherwise moving back and forth above like silver clouds.

Then what a revelation on Simchas Torah when, for once in a year, we were permitted on the *bimah* and could watch the Torahs being dressed! Open, they were nothing—one could see ink-writing in the siddur, or in school. But to watch their fat sides tied together with a white ribbon, their red velvet dresses slipped on, fringed in gold, and with lions!—from my seat I could never see the lions. And then over the lions clanged their silver breastplates! I could see now that they were not mere blank silver, those breastplates. They too had little crowns, with green beads bouncing from the tips. And they had two tiny doors that opened and locked on a little all-silver Torah; they had a slot where you could change the name of the holiday, each name engraved in Hebrew on a silver calling-card. And with my finger, I rang the bells—I could almost see the bells clearly, standing on tiptoe: I thought the crown like that of any Russian czar (and I was quite right). The other Torahs had double crowns that you might take up—on Simchas Torah—and shake like silver gourds.

There was a pointer, too, with filigree handle and a tiny pointing hand, like a backscratcher but ever so much more beautiful.

I REMEMBER my grandfather's shul as it changed its appearance and its atmosphere for many different occasions. I remember the weddings, with baskets of flowers on either side of the Persian throw rugs, looped together with wide white ribbons and bows; and the cumbersome gold-painted wood *chupah* loaded with boughs; the feel of rose petals, fresh rose petals in the shallow baskets we used for wedding after wedding, and my amazement—half regret—at watching whole roses hastily torn apart to fill a flower-girl's basket. Then, when I had graduated to train-bearing, I remember rows and rows of white satin buttons: every bride's dress in those days was fastened with innumerable satin buttons from the neck down to the small of the back.

I remember Shabbas because then the shul was slightly boring in a polite and beautiful way, like pleasant company stopping over too long. On Shabbas I had a chance to see how different leaves grew in the shrubbery and to observe the shapes of the Hebrew letters in the siddur. I would count the number of times God's name appeared on each page—he was always easy to find. But I never realized until long afterwards that sometimes he hid there in disguise—in four letters rather than two. I only knew him in his two-letter form. And I would torment my mother for a paraphrase of longer English words until she whispered, indulgent and surprised, "Don't you know what *that* means?" Of course I knew, but one had to do *something*.

I remember the High Holy Days only because of white drapes on ark and *shulchan*, and the heavy, yellowed wool prayer shawls the men wore, with black bands falling in angles and squares like the Hebrew letters. There were so many beards on the men's side. There was my grandfather's, white, curly, parted in the middle and bunched to either side (like Max Nordau's, I thought later); and there was Uncle Sam's beard—a little black pointed one.

Uncle Sam was in my eyes the embodiment of holiness. He stayed up all night on Yom Kippur. He wore slippers—I suppose some of the other men did, too, but I looked

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to make sure of Uncle Sam's. He preached to us—but never having made up his mind whether to talk of holy subjects in Hebrew or English, he compromised—or vacillated—between the two. It was not until much later that I found out that a sermon can convey—indeed is often expected to elucidate—thought. A sermon in the days of Uncle Sam was an indulgence, tolerated after the Torah reading solely out of politeness. It rose to a high pitch of incomprehensibility and nobody ever took it seriously.

Nevertheless, I took Uncle Sam seriously. He always seemed to fast harder than anybody else on Yom Kippur. He always got the first glass of water afterwards. One night I dreamed about Uncle Sam—the only dream I recall from my childhood. I dreamed that he and my grandmother stood at the entrance to Heaven. It was an anteroom, rather like the dressing room under the great stairway in my grandfather's house. At one end, where the coats were generally put, hung a curtain, a roll-up curtain like the one in the auditorium at school. Behind it lay the conviction of Heaven. My grandmother approached. The curtain did not budge; its painted trees stood stiff and tall. Then Uncle Sam drew near and immediately the roots of the trees curled inward, the whole curtain rolled up, and my uncle went his way to Heaven. I awoke with a most painful sense of disloyalty to my grandmother. What was Uncle Sam to me, that I should put his soul above hers?

Uncle Sam died twenty years after my grandfather. He died in Palestine—just. His boat docked there one day and he died the next—of starvation, having lived on orange juice all the way across because he did not consider the food on the boat to be kosher. I suppose that in the end he did bear out my dream of him.

THERE were not many men in my grandfather's shul as rigorous as Uncle Sam. As a rule, such persons attended the downtown synagogue, which they held in a grip of iron. My grandfather steered his shul with satin reins, but he had his way. With the help of the Bezalel School and the oilwells, he made orthodoxy so fashionable in Tulsa that to this day the Reform congregation there has not collected enough money to build up more than the first story of its Temple. He imported a cantor—Pinchos Jassinowsky, newly arrived in this country. My grandfather found him singing in a church choir. When they asked the boy later what he had sung, he replied that it had quite a pretty tune, and quoted the words phonetically: "Je-sus-loaf-er-off-my-soul."

The family brought a service with them from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, which had been just across the street from them. Whenever there was a prayer that had no tune in that service, Jassinowsky wrote music for it. He set the whole Friday night service to new music. He furnished variants which gave me some excitement on Shabbas—what tune for "Ain Kelohenu"? What length for "Adon Olam"? From another relative, a cantor in Kansas City, we took a third set of songs. Our musical versatility was amazing, and that is just what my grandfather wanted it to be.

He sought a new type of Judaism, which I may say I have never met since the days of his shul and do not consider myself likely to meet ever again. Perhaps Moses Montefiore sponsored something like this in his private chapel, but I doubt it; Montefiore was at once too literal and too orthodox. My grandfather was willing to stretch a point for effect, quite without loss of sincerity—somewhat in the manner of Mr. Markowitz. There was too much decorum in his shul for it to be Orthodox, too much familiarity with tradition for it to be Reform. We were Conservative—but with a difference. I have always thought of our brand of religion as aesthetic Judaism, since in the final analysis the test of a practice or belief was not: is it true, is it logical, is it commanded, is it traditional?—but, taking all these matters for granted, is it beautiful?

When he made enough money to do exactly what he wanted, my grandfather did exactly what any good Jew would want to do.

He published privately his own commentary on Ecclesiastes and saw his name in print—names, rather: our family runs to threes in names. My grandfather's were Lionel Eliezer Zorah. Uncle Sam was Vivien Samuel David. And I remember how my husband stared when he inquired into my name for the *ketubah* and was told, "Chanah Chesna Feigel daughter of Alfred Enoch Zundel of the family Aaronson"!

L. E. Z. Aaronson built a house for each

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of his four married daughters and one son, all within five blocks of his own home. The congregation was filled with his tribe—on Shabbas we had twenty or twenty-five to services (all singing); on holidays, sixty. Shabbas afternoons he gathered his children round and read *Perek,* the sayings of the Fathers, to them. This went on for nearly ten years, and, human nature aside, there was no reason why it should not have continued forever.

But it ended—the Shabbas afternoons, the oil wells, the shul, my grandfather's life. It ended in a family fight and lawsuit that made the front pages of the newspapers. Had that happened fifty years ago instead of twenty-five I might give details. However, the final blow-up only proved what Emerson wrote: "We were not made to talk poetry, or to be always wise." By the same token, it is just as well we possess other brands of Judaism than the aesthetic in this country. Like every other beautiful thing, my grandfather's aesthetic Judaism lived its moment, and passed. Wistful reminiscence is all I can summon up to protest its passing. I suppose that sort of ritual could be lastingly effective only in very small quantities, mixed with a large amount of something at once more earthy and more fallible.

I HAVE often wondered what memories my cousins retain of our grandfather's shul. At least two of them have married Gentiles. Of the others, few care that there is such a thing as Judaism—except for anti-Semitism. Yet during those years their experience and mine were identical; and I know that upon me the influence was direct, permanent, and peculiar. Once when I was six, I stood out in my grandmother's front garden on a Shabbas while the grown-ups were in shul, and watched the cars ride by. And I thought to myself with certainty: "There go the cars. In not one of those cars is a Jew. A Jew wouldn't ride on Shabbas." There in the street passed the rest of the world, and here in the garden stood I, amid Jews and roses. Something of that frame of mind persists, and makes it still seem odd that Jews are ever poor, are ever ugly (our family was persistently good-looking), are ever persecuted, hounded, insulted, are ever vulgar or raucous.

What reminded me of my grandfather's shul this last Simchas Torah is that, of all the holidays celebrated there, I remember Simchas Torah most clearly. A child would. I remember the singing—my first Hasidic melodies. I do not remember drinking: perhaps my grandfather would not allow it, perhaps I didn't notice it. We were not given candles to march with at all: we had flags for the girls, *neviim* for the boys. How we marched! It took exactly three choruses to take us round that *bimah.* I always managed so I would stop precisely on the third repeated pattern of the Persian throw-rugs. I hopped on one border with the right foot—on the other border with the left foot. Everyone was there, all the family, all the friends; no one was at business, no one was at school, no Jew anywhere in the world was any place but at shul, with the Torah.

Judaism has never lived up to the promise of my Simchas Torahs—or rather, I would say, Jews have not done so. Whenever they approximate it, as in Iowa City this past year, the most that is renewed of old days is a piercing nostalgia for what might have been, for what I thought then would surely be. And I am sorry my daughter will never get the chance to celebrate Simchas Torah in my grandfather's shul.

But she had a good time this Simchas Torah just the same. I saw that. Maybe she enjoyed herself just as much here in Iowa as I did in Tulsa. Maybe she makes the same thing out of what she gets.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE TESTAMENT OF ELEAZAR OF MAYENCE

The Ideals of an Average Jew of the 14th Century

THE writing of "ethical" wills or, as Israel Abrahams puts it, "testamentary directions for the religious and secular guidance of children," has been a Jewish practice since at least the 12th century, though it is by no means a practice confined exclusively to Jews.

The testament of Eleazar of Mayence—or Mainz—which we publish below, is a fairly typical specimen of its genre. Eleazar died in 1357. He was not a rabbi, and Abrahams, in his prefatory note, says he may be regarded as, for his times, "an average Jew of the North."

The translation below is from *Hebrew Ethical Wills*, edited by Israel Abrahams and published by the Jewish Publication Society of America, by whose permission we reprint it.—ED.

My grandfather's Testament to his children; and as it is a rule good for every God-fearer, I write it here, that all men may follow it. A worthy Testament, whose ways are ways of pleasantness; proven and seemly for publishing to all the people. [Introductory note by the author's grandson.]

THESE are the things which my sons and daughters shall do at my request. They shall go to the house of prayer morning and evening, and shall pay special regard to the Tephillah and the Shema. So soon as the service is over, they shall occupy themselves a little with the Torah, the Psalms, or with works of charity. Their business must be conducted honestly, in their dealings both with Jew and Gentile. They must be gentle in their manners, and prompt to accede to every honorable request. They must not talk more than is necessary, by this will they be saved from slander, falsehood, and frivolity. They shall give an exact tithe of all their possessions; they shall never turn away a poor man empty-handed, but must give him what they can, be it much or little. If he beg a lodging overnight, and they know him not, let them provide him with the wherewithal to pay an inn-keeper. Thus shall they satisfy the needs of the poor in every way.

My daughters must obey scrupulously the rules applying to women; modesty, sanctity, reverence, should mark their married lives. They should carefully watch for the signs of the beginning of their periods and keep separate from their husbands at such times. Marital intercourse must be modest and holy, with a spirit of restraint and delicacy, in reverence and silence. They shall be very punctilious and careful with their ritual bathing, taking with them women friends of worthy character. They shall cover their eyes until they reach their home, on returning from the bath, in order not to behold anything of an unclean nature. They must respect their husbands, and must be invariably amiable to them. Husbands, on their part, must honor their wives more than themselves, and treat them with tender consideration.

If they can by any means contrive it, my sons and daughters should live in communities, and not isolated from other Jews, so that their sons and daughters may learn the ways of Judaism. Even if compelled to solicit from others the money to pay a teacher, they must not let the young, of both sexes, go without instruction in the Torah. Marry your children, O my sons and daughters, as soon as their age is ripe, to members of respectable families. Let no

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child of mine hunt after money by making a low match for that object; but if the family is undistinguished only on the mother's side, it does not matter, for all Israel counts descent from the father's side.

Every Friday morning, they shall put themselves in careful trim for honoring the Sabbath, kindling the lamps while the day is still great, and in winter lighting the furnace before dark, to avoid desecrating the Sabbath. For due welcome to the Sabbath, the women must prepare beautiful candles. As to games of chance, I entreat my children never to engage in such pastimes. During the leisure of the festival weeks they may play for trifling stakes in kind, and the women may amuse themselves similarly on New Moons, but never for money. In their relation to women, my sons must behave continently, avoiding mixed bathing and mixed dancing and all frivolous conversation, while my daughters ought not to speak much with strangers, nor jest nor dance with them. They ought to be always at home, and not be gadding about. They should not stand at the door, watching whatever passes. I ask, I command, that the daughters of my house be never without work to do, for idleness leads first to boredom, then to sin. But let them spin, or cook, or sew.

I EARNESTLY beg my children to be tolerant and humble to all, as I was throughout my life. Should cause for dissension present itself, be slow to accept the quarrel, seek peace and pursue it with all the vigor at your command. Even if you suffer loss thereby, forbear and forgive, for God has many ways of feeding and sustaining His creatures. To the slanderer do not retaliate with counter-attack; and though it be proper to rebut false accusations, yet it is most desirable to set an example of reticence. You yourselves must avoid uttering any slander, for so will you win affection. In trade be true, never grasping at what belongs to another. . . .

Now, my sons and daughters, eat and drink only what is necessary, as our good parents did, refraining from heavy meals, and holding the gross liver in detestation. The regular adoption of such economy in food leads to economy in expenditure generally, with a consequent reluctance to pursue after wealth, but the acquisition of a contented spirit, simplicity in diet, and many good results. Concerning such a well-ordered life, the text says: "The righteous eateth to the satisfaction of his desire." Our teachers have said: "Method in expenditure is half a sufficiency." Nevertheless, accustom yourselves and your wives, your sons and your daughters, to wear nice and clean clothes, that God and man may love and honor you. In this direction do not exercise too strict a parsimony. But on no account adopt foreign fashions in dress. After the manner of your fathers order your attire, and let your cloaks be broad without buckles attached.

Be on your guard concerning vows, and cautious as to promises. The breach of one's undertakings leads to many lapses. Do not get into the habit of exclaiming "Gott!" but speak always of the "Creator, blessed be He"; and in all that you propose to do, today or tomorrow, add the proviso, "if the Lord wills, I shall do this thing." Thus remember God's part in your life.

Whatever happiness befall you, be it in monetary fortune or in the birth of children, be it some signal deliverances or any other of the many blessings which may come to you, be not stolidly unappreciative, like dumb cattle that utter no word of gratitude. But offer praises to the Rock who has befriended you, saying "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who art good and dispensest good." Besides thanking God for His bounties at the moment they occur, also in your regular prayers let the memory of these personal favors prompt your hearts to special fervor during the utterance of the communal thanks. When words of gratitude are used in the liturgy, pause to reflect in silence on the goodness of God to you that day. And when you make the response: "May Thy great Name be blessed," call to mind your own personal experience of the divine favor.

Be very particular to keep your houses clean and tidy. I was always scrupulous on this point, for every injurious condition, and sickness and poverty, are to be found in foul dwellings. Be careful over the benedictions; accept no divine gift without paying back the Giver's part; and His part is man's grateful acknowledgment.

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Every one of these good qualities becomes habitual with him who studies the Torah; for that study indeed leads to the formation of a noble character. Therefore, happy is he who toils in the Law! For this gracious toil fix daily times, of long or short duration, for it is the best of all works that a man can do. Week by week read at least the set portion with the commentary of Rashi. And when your prayer is ended day by day, turn ever to the word of God, in fulfillment of the Psalmist's injunction, "passing from strength to strength."

And O, my sons and daughters, keep yourselves far from the snare of frivolous conversation, which begins in tribulation and ends in destruction. Nor be you found in the company of these light talkers. Judge you rather every man charitably and use your best efforts to detect an honorable explanation of conduct however suspicious. Try to persuade yourselves that it was your neighbor's zeal for some good end that led him to the conduct you deplore. This is the meaning of the exhortation: "In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." To sum up, the fewer one's idle words the less one's risk of slander, lying, flattery—all of them, things held in utter detestation by God.

On holidays and festivals and Sabbaths seek to make happy the poor, the unfortunate, widows and orphans, who should always be guests at your tables; their joyous entertainment is a religious duty. Let me repeat my warning against gossip and scandal. And as you speak no scandal, so listen to none, for if there were no receivers there would be no bearers of slanderous tales; therefore the reception and credit of slander is as serious an offence as the originating of it. The less you say, the less cause you give for animosity, while "in the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression."

Always be of those who see and are not seen, who hear and are not heard. Accept no invitations to banquets, except to such as are held for religious reasons: at weddings and at meals prepared for mourners, at gatherings to celebrate entry into the covenant of Abraham, or at assemblies in honor of the wise. Games of chance for money stakes, such as dicing, must be avoided. And as I have again warned you on that head, again let me urge you to show forbearance and humility to all men, to ignore abuses levelled at you, but the indignant refutation of charges against your moral character is fully justifiable.

Be of the first ten in synagogue, rising betimes for the purpose. Pray steadily with the congregation, giving due value to every letter and word, seeing that there are in the Shema two hundred and forty-eight words, corresponding to the two hundred and forty-eight limbs in the human body. Be careful too to let the prayer for redemption be followed immediately by the eighteen benedictions. Do not talk during the service, but listen to the precentor, and respond "Amen" at the proper time. After the morning prayer, read the chapter about the Manna, the passages associated with it, and the eleven verses, with due attention to clear enunciation. Then recite a Psalm in lieu of reading in the Torah; though it were well not to omit the latter, passing, as I said above, from strength to strength, from prayer to the Bible, before turning to worldly pursuits. Or if you can perform some act of loving kindness, it is accounted as equal to the study of the Law.

I beg of you, my sons and daughters, my wife and all the congregation, that no funeral oration be spoken in my honor. Do not carry my body on a bier but in a coach. Wash me clean, comb my hair, trim my nails, as I was wont to do in my lifetime, so that I may go clean to my eternal rest, as I went clean to synagogue every Sabbath day. If the ordinary officials dislike the duty, let adequate payments be made to some poor man who shall render this service carefully and not perfunctorily. At a distance of thirty cubits from the grave, they shall set my coffin on the ground, and drag me to the grave by a rope attached to the coffin. Every four cubits they shall stand and wait awhile, doing this in all seven times, so that I may find atonement for my sins. Put me in the ground at the right hand of my father, and if the space be a little narrow, I am sure that he loves me well enough to make room for me by his side. If this be altogether impossible, put me on his left, or near my grandmother, Yuta. Should this also be impractical, let me be buried by the side of my daughter.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

NEEDED: SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION

How Long Will Free Inquiry Neglect this Basic Field?

ERWIN R. GOODENOUGH

RELIGION provided assertions which civilization in the past accepted as final answers to such basic questions as "Where do I come from?" "Where do I go from here?" "What is it right for me to do?" "Why is this right and that wrong?" "If I don't do what is right, what will happen to me?" "If I do it what reward may I expect?" Religion also answered the similar, but broader, questions of social origins, destiny, and sanctions. Science, however, when it came along suggested the insufficiency of these religious explanations, and proceeded by factual study (in which the formulas of the past had no place) to give men insights into the nature of the body and of their physical environment such as the old world of belief and dogma never conceived.

But, in spite of science, man is still man, and still feels the need for certainty about social relations and personal destiny—a need whose satisfaction science can only promise after an infinity of time. The majority of people do not feel that they can wait for the truth, and they still continue, even though they may not recognize religious authority, to look for their final values in ways that are recognizably religious. Even in the intellectual world some want to go "back" to some pre-scientific view for finalities, pre-scientific because all authoritarianism is pre-scientific. Most conspicuously, the last twenty-five years has seen mass movements, much of whose dynamic comes from "totalitarian" assertions (often couched in pseudo-scientific language) on the nature and purpose of man, which repudiate the experimental uncertainty which is the life-blood of science, and would purge the laboratories and universities of all those who are uncertain. In the revived interest in traditional religions, in the new lure of fascist and Communist ideologies, the need for and the potencies of "finalities" over man's mind and behavior are demonstrating themselves again.

Although many individual scientists and literary popularizers of science have renounced religion, there has never been an attack by science on religion: science has simply passed religion by. Science struggled in the old days for freedom to experiment and publish, and won the battle. What happened to the oppressor after he was driven out of their particular territory most scientists did not bother to inquire. Indeed many of them remained devoutly religious after accepted patterns. So much has science ignored religion that with a few exceptions (to be mentioned in a moment) hardly anyone has applied the new methods of

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IN THE centuries-old debate between science and religion, attention has been devoted almost exclusively to the question of whether or not the statements of religion are in harmony with the statements of science, and one basic fact has tended to be overlooked: that the religious experience is an important and apparently indestructible element in human life, and as such demands serious—and, above all, *scientific*—study. ERWIN R. GOODENOUGH, professor of the history of religion at Yale University, here proposes the systematic development of a neglected field of knowledge: the free and scientific study of religion. Professor Goodenough was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1893, and studied at Hamilton College and Drew Theological Seminary. He received his doctorate at Oxford University in 1923. He is the author of a number of scholarly works on Jewish theology and philosophy, the latest of which is *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus,* published in 1940.

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factual study to religious experience itself. And so scientists, themselves quite ignorant in these matters, have not recognized that in their new enemies, the totalitarian ideologies which now again threaten to choke them, they only face—in a new uniform—their old enemy, the human craving for certainty in an uncertain world.

What is this craving for certainty? Free inquiry still continues to ignore this central question about religion, and shows no real interest in ascertaining factually the nature of religious experience and its relations to human behavior and social institutions. Failing to do this, we lack a basis for evaluating in any discriminating way religion's moral, social, and political assets and liabilities, potential and actual, for the individual and for present-day society. This is no academic question for our times, as I have tried to suggest, now that authoritarian finalities, both traditional and new, are very much on the order of the day, challenging not only science, but the development of a truly democratic way of life. Religion, like other human forces, needs to be understood if it is to serve man. And science is man's way of understanding.

THE suggestion that the field of religion remains essentially untouched by modern scientific scholarship is always greeted with derision by the pundits of the organized religions. It is true that tremendous industry has been put into religious studies, vast publications have come forth, and religious scholars have made themselves as learned as scholars in any other field. This, however, is not the point. The medieval scholastics were just as learned, relatively, as modern religious scholars.

Industry and learning do not guarantee the critical method that is the hallmark of science; if they did, the old rabbis and modern Jesuits, with their colossal erudition, would be the most scientifically critical of us all. The apologists of religious scholarship take a proper pride in the tremendous energy and critical acumen that have gone into modern biblical study, its magnificent technical achievements, the enormous ingenuity of its leaders; and they go on to point out, as a brilliant president of the Society of Biblical Literature recently did, that biblical scholars should be fully as ready as scientists to accept conclusions violating all their prejudices and emotional commitments, whenever the evidence seems to compel such conclusions. I am convinced, however, that few religious scholars have ever had this kind of experience. To be sure, the conscious minds of the majority of biblical scholars are honestly concerned with problems of marshaling, accepting, and rejecting evidence. But somehow whenever a religious study with radical conclusions has appeared it has been almost completely predictable which scholars would accept and which reject it.

Biblical criticism has had little or no effect in producing changes of belief or new attitudes. Rather it was "progress" and "liberalism" that produced biblical criticism. However, this liberal movement did not rest on an essentially scientific attitude that lays aside all hope of certainty. Instead, we had the attempt to use religious tradition or, by selective criticism, scraps of it, to give certainty to that bastard child of 19th-century science: the hope of immediate progress to perfection.

Few are aware that the humanism of liberal Christianity had been announced with no historical research at all by the 15th-century Socinians (who followed a few phrases of the young Erasmus), and that it later became the doctrine of the 17th- and 18th-century anti-clericals in England and France. The *philosophes* rejected authoritarian Christianity, hated the Church, and turned men instead to such a study of man as produced all later democratic and socialist movements. These movements, which by no means constituted scientific evaluations of society, became so generally attractive that they forced themselves upon those who emotionally had still to consider themselves Christians. It was inevitable that such people should begin to study the records of early Christianity so as to convince themselves that the Gospels' basic message was the promise that Jesus would lead man into the golden age of democracy or socialism. Completely unconscious though they may have been of the fact, the great leaders of this movement—Strauss, Renan, Harnack, and many others—were only using their scholarship to justify a humanistic position which they had accepted quite prior to any scholarly justification from Christian sources.

What I am trying to say is that this great 19th- and early 20th-century flowering of religious scholarship, for all its scientific techniques and its great discoveries of forgotten and important facts, was still essentially medieval. Harnack, no less than Aquinas, was a devoted Christian who felt that the end of his quest, his conclusions about the *Wesen des Christentums,* as reached on the basis of a study of the

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original documents, must command his final devotion. This is not the scientific way. The chemist is not convinced that the final truth of chemistry was revealed two thousand years ago, and that it is his job to fight and die for what he persuades himself was the major premise, the *Wesen,* of that revelation. While emotional prejudices play a definite part in the thinking of every scientist, in so far as a man is a real scientist he fights those prejudices and admits that he sees only through a glass darkly, a glass not of faith but of his faulty perception; and he holds all his knowledge in solution as he continues to seek a newer and deeper knowledge that may show his present knowledge to be quite erroneous. But the religious scholars, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish, begin with a God-given roof—or one *emotionally* given, as you may call it—and all their labor is to get some support under that roof so that it will shelter them in security now and always.

Schools of authoritarian Judaism, like their Christian counterparts, knew no questions except those involved in the detailed interpretation of their own great traditions. If one compares the Halachic tradition of the Orthodox rabbinical schools with Catholic Christianity, and Cabbalistic and Hasidic Judaism with Protestant Christianity, the comparison will show that all four had in common the fact that they lived in an ethical and natural philosophy utterly different from that of the new world, and that all four presented their teachings as final revealed truth.

At just about the same time that the new humanistic ideas of progress and social amelioration through democracy and socialism began to force themselves into Christianity, Moses Mendelssohn and his followers initiated the movement that is represented today in this country by Reform Judaism. The scholarship of this movement, which liked to call itself the *"Wissenschaft des Judentums"*—"Jewish science"—spread out in a great many directions under masterful minds, but it was essentially dedicated to showing that 19th-century idealism was the *Wesen* of Judaism, too. Beneath the legal observances was a foundation provided by the Prophets, whose message had been social justice, and a God who would reward the faithful with an ideal society so long as they practiced social justice. Accordingly, the ancient observances of Judaism could be abandoned, and one could still feel that one had not destroyed the religion of one's fathers, but had fulfilled it. When Reform Jews came to accept Jesus as the proper culmination of the Jewish Prophetic movement, Reform Judaism and liberal Christianity became almost indistinguishable.

Almost simultaneously with liberal Christianity and Reform Judaism two other types of study were begun that made a much closer approach to scientific study of religious problems. I refer to the opening up of two new fields, the psychology of religion and the history of religion.

The study of the psychology of religion was brilliantly begun in this country by the researches of Starbuck and William James. Both men were largely concerned with the psychology of Christian experience—Protestant experience for the most part—but Leuba, Coe, and Pratt later took data from every religion. However, nothing of importance seems to have come out of this field for the last twenty-five years. Exponents of the two new dominant trends in psychology, Freudianism and the experimental psychology which works largely on the basis of neurology or of a stimulus-response ideology, have either ignored the field or contented themselves with hasty judgments. I know of no important psychologists of any school who are at present making a special study of religion, to get at the foundation of what is perhaps the most important single psychological pattern in human life.

In the field of the history of religion even more important beginnings were made. Men tried to find common elements that would serve as common denominators for the amazingly diversified phenomena produced by the new discipline of anthropology as well as by the systematic study of the historical religions. One tremendous work was begun by Max Mueller and his associates, who tried to make the classics of all great religions available to Western scholars. Many others studied the origin and nature of religion from an evolutionary point of view. In all this activity, of course, false starts were made, but it seems to me much of permanent value was produced. But this scholarly growth has withered, too, under the same blight that in late years has struck all humanistic study—the attitude that values accuracy of detail above the understanding of larger principles, and small conclusions above large ones, because they are safer.

The historical study of religion began as

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Religionsgeschichte, the history of religion, an attempt to understand religion by studying its tremendously varied manifestations. Unlike the philosophy of religion—which devoted itself to discussing, by a priori methods, the being and nature of God, our power to know him, and the like—the history of religion adopted a thoroughly empirical approach. Its conclusions were often reached too rapidly from insufficient data, but these were toppled or corrected just as rapidly by new data. Yet the blight of pedantic narrowness has spread so steadily that by now our country's most famous scholar in the field can say—as he did the other day—with considerable satisfaction, that the old collective study of religion has died out entirely: men now study not religion, but religions or a single religion. Today we have facts for their own sake, and a vanishing minimum of theory.

PERHAPS my meaning is becoming clear. In a day when men desperately need guidance in the field of values, religious scholars have largely renounced the effort to produce general value judgments from their studies, and have turned again to blind traditionalism, which holds men to centuries-old phrases, formulas, and rites merely because they are traditional. Or else they embellish tradition with a scholarship whose purpose is not to discover the nature of religion and its possible place in man's life today, but to demonstrate that the religious ideas and laws of the past are, after all, really respectable in the modern world. So the study of religion, which began so promisingly, has either been given up altogether, as in psychology, or has gone off into confessed futilitarianism—that is, to the discovery of unrelated details—along with the rest of the humanities.

The conclusion to be derived from all this seems inevitable. There is only one course left for those of us who do not want to relapse into traditionalism—or who by their conditioning in the modern world are quite unable to do so—but who do recognize the perplexing difficulties placed before us, individually and as a whole, by authoritarian assertions. Seriously and on a large scale, we must begin a study of religion and ethics in which we use, not less, but more scientific method. What needs to be tried, not by scattered individuals (who have always been active), but by organized groups, is a real attempt for the first time in history to be scientific in the study of religion. By scientific, I mean that we gather data not to prove that Jesus, Hosea, Mohammed, or Karl Marx is right—or wrong—but in order to find out what the religious experience of man has come from, where he gets his ideals, and which ideals have worked constructively and which not.

In such a study each man will, of course, have to work in a corner of the field, as do the chemists. Those who are metaphysicians will try to construct a metaphysics out of the empirical sciences, but not to impose one upon them a priori. Those who have an ethical interest, or who are concerned with the solace and inspiration man has traditionally looked for in religion, will try to get the most information they can as to the nature of human ends from the nature of man as a physical, psychological, and social animal.

The basic studies will have to be the two already mentioned: first, the psychology of religion, since, empirically, religion is a psychological experience to be approached from the point of view of individual or of social psychology; and second, the history of religion, in which the data of the religious patterns in all ages and climates, with their effects upon their devotees, are studied.

These two fields would by no means be dealt with in isolation from each other. The history of religion can be no more than a series of disjointed facts unless the facts are placed together on the common ground of human psychology; and the psychology of religion will find in the data of history a body of clinical material that will give meaning and perspective, as nothing else can, to the material collected by contemporary observation within our own civilization.

To these would of course be added the study of anthropology, linguistics, aesthetics, and a number of other studies. Each of these would have to be examined by the best technical methods of the day. But always it is to be hoped that the details would be regarded for their broad importance in the general picture, else all would have been in vain.

WHAT I am saying can—and probably will—be easily caricatured. To demand that, if some one finds a reference to an unknown mystery religion in Greece or discovers a lost manuscript of Philo, he should at once show the contribution of such a discovery to the scale of human values, would indeed be ridiculous. But I see nothing fantastic in expecting that a study of Egyptian or Hindu religion should in the end produce from the data involved long rip-

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ened suggestions about the relation of faith and reason—little though such results are now expected from this kind of research.

By means of such studies, I think we might hope really to face some elemental problems at last—such a problem as the one posed by that famous statement of Karl Marx (or one of his followers) which has had so wide a currency in our times, and which is a specter haunting the true scholar in religion, or should be. Is religion an opiate? If some thunder "Yes!" some "No!" it is only on the basis of emotional predilection. The fact is, no one in the world knows enough about religion today to answer the question one way or another in any objective sense. Perhaps it is true that man has the tendency to escape from reality to dreams, and that this is his most tragic weakness. But perhaps it is his greatest strength. Perhaps, as religionists claim, he is not taking refuge in dreams at all, but reaching forward from illusion to reality itself.

A good case can be made by selective use of data for either answer—but what are the facts? How, in terms of this problem, does religion actually work, individually and socially? What kind of behavior does it make for? Despite the fact that the correct answer to this question would, if empirically demonstrated, constitute the most important empirical study of all time, there is today not a single institution or university department of study dedicated to an attempt to answer it or any question like it.

Surely it is useless to try to show that Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, or Islam is the supreme religion of all, if religion itself is only man's ultimate delusion and distraction. My own hunch, to use a word respectable in science, is that no simple answer will cover the ground; that under certain conditions and circumstances, if religion is an opiate, it may well be that such an opiate is the most desirable thing in the world; and accordingly what we must do is neither deny it obdurately to agonized humanity nor peddle it indiscriminately. What we must do is understand it in order to use it intelligently.

Just as the "truth" of physics never has been and never will be the discovery of any one man —if of any men—so the solution to such a problem as the one above, even if intensively sought by religious scholars all over the world, would surely not be found in a short time or, probably, ever found completely. Indeed, most men will tend to dismiss such a proposal as I am making with the objections: "What will such a study of religion have to teach us for the problems of our day? Of what good would it be to the United Nations or any other of the international bureaus? What we need is directives for today. One might go on with this academic research indefinitely without coming to any final truths to guide men."

Of course, the same objection might be raised against all the natural sciences. Why pour so much money into the study of physics, chemistry, and the rest, since their experts cannot tell us the real nature of the physical world? Perhaps it is foolish to go on with medical research, since after all these years medical science is still so far from knowing the ultimate secrets of the human body. The obvious answer is that, if the final objectives of the natural sciences have never been achieved, if full understanding is a limit that we approach, apparently, without ever reaching, still the incidental discoveries made *en route* have transformed the relation of man with nature, and made possible a level of health and comfort that unscientific ages never dreamed of.

Similarly, if groups of scholars could be set upon an empirical and uncommitted study of religion, they would also find their final objective retreating before them infinitely. But I am equally convinced that, just as has occurred in the natural sciences, the incidental discoveries of such research in religion, partial and clumsy as they might later prove, would have revolutionary power in their own realm, in the moral and social life of man, and affect man's whole sense of relation to his fellows and the universe. In an age that spends billions of dollars to discover means by which to destroy human beings, a few millions could well be spent yearly on a truly objective study of the problems of religion, morals, and human values.

A TRULY objective and uncommitted study of religion? I have used these adjectives deliberately because they are scorned by the traditional scholars. In closing, I must say what I mean by them.

I am fully aware of the impossibility of a completely dispassionate approach to any human problem, especially those of religion or morals. No one can possibly be without emotional reaction, negative or positive, to the statement that man lives in a world guided by a personal God who is interested in us individually, and listens sympathetically to each of our prayers. The emotional situation is similar

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for the claims of individual religions: every Christian, Moslem, or Jew begins with some preconception of superiority. Again, few people can refrain from an emotional yes or no to the proposition that the turning point of the history of man and of all relations between man and the metaphysical world was historically presented by the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus. We know that historians—as well as all other scholars in the humanities and the social studies—have, and must have, their prejudices.

Some however go from this admission that all individuals are to some degree prejudiced, to the assertion that recognized prejudices are safer than unrecognized ones, and that just as one expects the best history of England to be written by Englishmen, so the best interpretation of Christianity must come from devout Christians. And from that it follows in their minds that the money for studying religion should be left in Christian control, rather than frittered away in an absurd search for an unattainable "unprejudiced" study of religion. Institutional interests in Judaism might well argue to much the same purpose, as no doubt they have.

The deep fallacy in this argument is that it steps so lightly from individual to corporate prejudice. Every economist has his point of view, but when a university department of economics begins (as is often done) to appoint only people with a given predilection in economics, the department is doomed. We do not expect any important contributions to economic theory to come out of economics faculties whose opinions are under close corporate control. But as it happens, Christian and Jewish faculties of theology tend to be corporately controlled, and a person whose conclusions might prove to be awkward to the group is simply not made part of such a faculty.

We must begin by escaping this corporate control of religious study if we hope for even a partially unprejudiced study of religion. What we tragically need is a number of groups, either in our greater universities as distinct departments, or as separate institutes, made up of men who will devote themselves to a factual study of religion of the sort I have described. The groups I envisage, while made up of individuals with their antecedent points of view, would as groups be uncommitted, so that the outcome of the study as a whole would be open and free. On only one point would the members of the group have to be in agreement, and that is on the value of free research in religion—just as democracy must allow freedom of speech and action but repress any one who would use that freedom to destroy it for others.

Several such groups should be started because if only one existed its tendency would be to form a new orthodoxy, however sincerely it exercised constant scrutiny to keep itself as varied as possible. One great philosophy department I know is aware that its members think too much alike, and is trying to save itself by finding some one who is opposed to what most of the present members believe. I know of no religious faculty in the world which has ever operated on such a principle. This very fact seems to make it all the more worthwhile to try to create such groups as are here proposed, and not one or two but many.

We could not, of course, hope to form such groups in a moment. Each would have to begin with an anchor man with the kind of ambition and point of view outlined here, who would watch the young men of the nation and gradually find here a psychologist, there a sociologist, there a historian, who would like to join him. It could presumably not be started profitably as an "interdepartmental cooperative," for the problem is one which is not to be a hobby or side interest to those studying it. Actually it would not take many years to build up a number of brilliant faculties. The wastage among the top five per cent of students in the theological seminaries of Christians and Jews has always been amazing: young men who would have liked to do exactly what I have described, but who have felt that they could not be rabbis or ministers teaching the finalities of any one religion, and so have gone out into quite other fields, and often become the leaders of their new studies. A few years ago in the history department of Yale we canvassed and found that over half of the members had carried their education a long way with the idea of becoming ministers. The older men could hardly be won back to study religion: their minds were now working in other directions (often quite far afield from religion altogether). But in their early years the possibility of such a field of study as is here suggested would have attracted many of them.

I have every confidence that what is proposed here *can* be done in not too long a time. It must be done if we are not to be swamped by the forces of obscurantism.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Our Secular Myths

To the Editor of Commentary:

No comment on the Dewey-Benda controversy in your November and January issues seems necessary except to say that Professor Dewey, as always, has covered himself with distinction. Anything anyone could say further on the matter would be anti-climax—and this includes anything M. Benda can say.

However, I would like to make explicit what seems implicit, but clear, in the opposing viewpoints of Dewey and Benda. This is the world-wide conflict between science and animism, the modern counterpart of what A. D. White aptly called "the warfare between science and theology." It is the struggle between natural science, especially in its application to social phenomena, and the many current rationalized versions of sacred myths. Crude, anthropomorphic supernaturalism is rapidly dying in Western culture, but many subtle, pseudo-scientific varieties of it keep cropping up in the form of new sacred and secular myths.

Books like Carrel's *Man the Unknown*, du Noüy's *Human Destiny*, J. B. Rhine's writings, and the Toynbee cult are evidence of the wide appeal of rationalized animistic thinking (sacred myths). The same type of absolutistic, all-or-nothing thinking is exhibited in such secular myths as free enterprise, dialectical materialism, nationalism, racism, neo-Thomism, etc. This type of irrational speculation is diametrically opposed to the scientific mode of thinking about man's behavior.

Man must choose between reliance upon hypothetical supernatural powers and the magic of wishful words (secular myths) and reliance upon the methods and findings of natural science. He must choose between his intelligence, derived from sensory experience according to the methods of science, and his verbalized hopes and fears. The outcome of this war of man against himself is in little doubt. Whenever science and animism (loosely used here to cover both sacred and secular myths) have come into conflict on specific issues, science has always won—not *immediately*, but finally.

The most pressing problem of modern man is whether he can learn to use his social intelligence, to depend upon science instead of fear, force, and prayer, *soon enough* to avert atomic war—which seems more imminent with every passing day. It is a sad commentary on man that he will spend seven million next year for Unesco while the United States alone spends nearly fourteen billion in preparation for war.

Pragmatism is a philosophy which is not inconsistent with modern natural science. It certainly is not a fixed and final perfect philosophy. It cannot be, by its own postulates. All absolutistic philosophies, whether grounded on crude or "refined" supernaturalism or merely on word-magic, are essentially unscientific and are frequently anti-scientific. They are the death-cries of the age of animism, the last futile effort to prevent the emergence of the age of science, especially as it deals with psychosocial phenomena. The attempt of animism to defeat the rise of the physical-biological sciences has failed. The attempt to prevent the application of scientific methods to the natural phenomena of social life will also fail. . . .

Read Bain
Reed College
Portland, Oregon

A Great Jewish Poet

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was immensely gratified to gather from the review of *Jacob's Dream* in your January issue that at long last some tribute is being paid to the creative personality of Richard Beer-Hofmann.

This distinguished Austrian-in-exile, who completed a long and full human existence living and dying in solitary grandeur in this country, is not sufficiently known among Americans. Little from his slim but exquisite literary inheritance has been translated into English; his poems are not read, his dramas not produced. And American Jews, as yet, have not felt the obligation to honor the memory of one of their own great contemporary poets by diffusing the knowledge and appreciation of his works.

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More than *Jacob's Dream,* reviewed with so much understanding by Stephen Spender, another poetic drama of Beer-Hofmann's, *The Count of Charolais,* would warrant an English language production on the stage. Since Shylock, no stronger or more poignantly emotional portrait of "the Jew" has been created in drama than the redhaired Itzig (originally acted by Max Reinhardt himself). Could no backers be found who would be able and willing to bring to life on an American stage this strangely passionate tragedy?

GISELLA SELDEN-GOTH

New York City

Thomas Mann's Nietzsche

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The revaluation of Nietzsche is a worthy project for COMMENTARY to initiate. Thomas Mann makes an interesting beginning, interesting because one sees how the incompleteness of his grasp of Nietzsche's importance prevents him from making a very convincing repudiation of Nietzsche's influence. Outside of their temperamental and intellectual differences, two historical factors make it especially difficult for the novelist to deal objectively with his spiritual ancestor: (a) The continued parochialism of German thought on the outskirts of Roman Europe (its innate assumption that since the real centers of power and authority lie elsewhere it may claim a wide speculative immunity), and (b) The sense in which Nietzsche was justified in speaking of a "transvaluation of values." He *was* something new in Christendom, not simply a new phase in an ever-recurring upsurge of heroic vitalism.

Mann wants to save Nietzsche's face as a spiritual and artistic phenomenon. As one "whose youth is incalculably indebted to him," he can only do this by continuing to maintain, as he has throughout his life and work, a distinction *in kind* between two realms of value, the aesthetic-dramatic and the logical-political. This he does by patronizing the latter. Here are a few of the devices he uses in the Nietzsche essay:

1. Making a distinction between "truth" and "wisdom," the first being the retrograde and necessary domain of politics, the second being the higher kind of existence. Of the possibility that politics itself, the life devoted to justice, may be in itself dangerous, exhilarating, and tragic, we hear no hint in Mann.

2. Assuming decency as a matter of expediency. "We ask ourselves, however, whether it *might not be better* to preserve respect for reason and truth among the masses. . . ."

3. Using "spiritualistic" terms to dignify immoral phenomena. Mann speaks of Nietzsche as a "saint of immorality." This forces him to coin a preposterous definition of sainthood—". . . that he does not do a single one of all the things he would like to do. . . ."

4. Assuming that irony can serve as a sufficient protective armor against criticism for writing that is avowedly philosophical discourse, spoken in the first person, and intended to form opinion. "He never, obviously, had the feeling of really doing them harm, but seemed to feel rather that the most awful insults he hurled at them were a form of homage."

At this point I must register my dismay as a Christian at the utter lameness of Mann's peroration on the "dawn of a new time." This endorsement of Nietzsche's undefined, "humanist" apocalypse more or less demands that we accept the essential Nietzsche after all. Nietzsche came the closest of any of the rebels of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance era to resurrecting the old Greek sense of fate, because he was able to seal Christ off into a special pocket of his mind where, with Dionysius and Apollo, he might reign in solitary aesthetic glory. By ignoring the dynamic of Christ operating in the forms and habits of Western thought, he could suppose that Christendom had deserted Christ as early as the ministry of Paul. We find this fiction, along with almost all of Nietzsche's leading notions, fed into American thought by way of Mencken and taking a strong hold in some Protestant circles.

Although Mann seems ready enough to "repudiate" Nietzsche, the fact remains that he has nothing to offer except a minimal lip-service to "reason" and "socialism." This is surely not a change of heart. The divine, the diseased, and the irrational continue to be identified in his mind, and the cult of the personality continues to be the most worthwhile and least "boring" modern activity. If it is true, as Mann claims, that we are going from an "aesthetic age" to a moral and social one, what is to become of that aspiration for danger, that *amor fati,* which was, after all, Nietzsche's great and valuable contribution to a world in which a bourgeoisie had made its professed ideals of "truth, liberty, and justice" not, indeed, only "banal," but plainly ridiculous?

R. W. FLINT

Cambridge, Mass.

Religion and "Progressivism"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found Mr. Kristol's article ["How Basic Is 'Basic Judaism'?" in the January COMMEN-

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TARY] very sympathetic, especially the paragraph which points out: "The law and the prophets taught the truths of life and not the truths of philosophy; the 'religious life' includes all of life, in its full particularity."

Jesus himself stated that he came to bring a more abundant life, which is a very different thing from proclaiming himself God of the philosophers.

What Mr. Kristol states in regard to basic Judaism is also true of other religious attitudes. Where Mr. Kristol speaks of the "perversion of the Jewish religion into a doctrine of social (and sociable) principles, the transformation of Messianism into a shallow, if sincere, humanitarianism, plus a thoroughgoing insensitivity to present-day spiritual problems," the same criticism can be applied to much of the religious thinking of the time in general.

But these brief comments are wholly inadequate in dealing with the rich and provocative article, which is intended, I imagine, to lead into a wider controversy.

MARY K. SIMKHOVITCH

Greenwich House
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Allow me to congratulate Mr. Kristol upon the fearless honesty displayed in his "How Basic is 'Basic Judaism'?" There can be little doubt that his disastrous criticism of what passes as "contemporary Jewish theology" is correct.

It is to be hoped that the fearlessness and honesty of that article will help correct a lamentable situation in which Jewish theology is little more than an appendix to "progressivism," sociology, or—the latest fad!—psychology. Incongruously, at a time when Jews need guidance from an autonomous theology as never before, Jewish theology degrades itself to the position of a mere mouthpiece of precisely those "isms" which have revealed themselves as impotent to answer the last and most urgent questions—pragmatism, idealism, progressivism.

I feel assured that if contemporary Jewish theologians began to become critical of their own unconscious philosophical presuppositions, and to read once more (as has not been done for centuries) the classic writings in Jewish theology with an open mind, they would go a long way toward answering the questions which Mr. Kristol so legitimately raises.

RABBI EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

Hamilton, Ontario

How Scientific is Freud?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Gertrude M. Kurth's "The Complex Behind Hitler's Anti-Semitism" in the January COMMENTARY is an excellent example of what psychoanalysis is trying to do under the guise of science. By extracting small details from the life of an individual and making them fit into her preconceived hypothesis, Dr. Kurth hopes to show the value of the psychoanalytical approach in history.

The keynote of all post-medieval science has been the establishment of theories on the basis of facts easily observable by all trained to see. Dr. Kurth's article represents an example of a reversion to medieval thinking when Aristotle's work was accepted as the law and all "scientists" wove their observations into the pronouncements of Aristotle. I do not think the analogy between modern psychoanalysis and medieval scholastics is too broad. Freud is the law; all else must fit.

The items chosen by Dr. Kurth to show that Hitler's anti-Semitism can be traced to an unresolved Oedipal crisis, can be accepted only as the purest conjecture. True, I find such conjecture very interesting. Dr. Kurth's article can be read for its sheer novelty; but such "science" is only escapism. To get at the real causes of social phenomena like anti-Semitism, we must go to social science—not the escapist pronouncements of those who try to fit facts into a set theory.

J. MYRON ATKIN

Flushing, N. Y.

"Commentary" in Wales

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The article by George Lichtheim, "England: The Citizen on Trial," in the January issue, is so brilliant a review of the situation in England that I hope you can see your way to issue a few reprints and let me have some. I would love my Member of Parliament friends to have some and am only sorry there are so few vehicles—if any—in England for opinion of this sort.

I hope you will make the possibilities of COMMENTARY known a little more in England. It is the healthiest and most refreshing journal I have seen on Jewish affairs and I don't know how anyone concerned with contemporary history can be without it.

ISIDORE WARTSKI

Bangor, North Wales

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Word Is Hysteria

EAGLE AT MY EYES. By NORMAN KATKOV. New York, Doubleday, 1948. 252 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

THIS book begins with the story of a pogrom and ends with the line, "All right, you bastards [the Gentiles], here I come." The hero, named Joe, tells his story in the first person, in a series of flashbacks. He is a reporter in St. Paul. Seven years ago he met a beautiful Gentile girl, of a good St. Paul family—he himself is the child of immigrant Jewish parents—and they fell decisively and unshakeably in love. There is no question in Joe's mind as to how his parents would react if they discovered he was going out with a Gentile girl—let alone considering marrying her. Nor is there any question as to what *her* parents would think. Evidence on the first point is given in a long section on the Jews of St. Paul: it seems there are literally hundreds of Jewish men in St. Paul (and thousands in Minneapolis) who have been mad about Gentile girls, and whose cases have all had the same tragic end: mother threatened to throw herself in front of a train if her son married that *shiksa;* and the unhappy lovers have either been leading a miserable and furtive existence as man and mistress ever since, or the son gave in completely to his mother's wishes and has been crushed and slightly queer ever since.

After this *excursus* the Jews of St. Paul disappear, and we neither see nor hear anything more of them. The evidence on the equivalent hatred of all Gentiles for all Jews is spread more evenly throughout the book, which includes not only the story of a pogrom, but the fullest possible calendar of anti-Semitic slights, insults, and expectations.

Having set up a situation of implacable, unalterable hatred on both sides, Jew against Gentile, Gentile against Jew (Joe never tries to alter the situation: on his first introduction to Mary's parents, who really treat him very nicely, he makes up a story to get Mary and himself out of the house immediately: "*of course* they hate me"), Mr. Katkov has only two alternatives for his hero: to go over to the people who hate him and whom he hates—except for one—or abandon that one, whom all *his* people hate, and go back to them; hardly either a true-to-life or fruitful set of alternatives for a novelist to pose. The last line of the book, already quoted, indicates his choice and the frame of mind in which he makes it.

As a novel, the book has almost nothing to recommend it. The flashback technique becomes boring; there is a total lack of insight into any of the characters, particularly the hero; the Jewish dialect in which the father's speech is written is disturbingly Chinese and prevents us taking him as seriously as we might. Only the mother comes through, and what Jewish writer could fail with his mother?

OUTSIDE of a psychological treatment of the author, which could only be speculative—though it seems apparent that he bears a tremendous load of self-hatred as a Jew, and a tremendous load of guilt for his presumed "desertion" from the group—the most useful thing one can do is place this novel in the stream of books about Jewish life in America.

Here it seems to me to hold a unique place; it combines a tone that was characteristic of the 20's and 30's with a subject matter and treatment that have become popular in the 40's. The books of the 20's and, decreasingly so, of the 30's were books about *Jewish* life: the Gentile was peripheral, and anti-Semitism was only an additional misfortune added to the major misfortune, poverty. These writers also expressed a kind of self-hatred, but one that was mingled with—or mostly—hatred of the horrible conditions of slum life and of the psychological types produced by hasty adjustment to American conditions, and was combined with a social diagnosis or criticism of some sort.

But Katkov's self-hatred cannot become either satire or social criticism, as it may have in these

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earlier writers, because the Jews, the subject of the indictment, are no longer present in any substantial or realistic way.

In Katkov's book the angry hatred of the 20's is reinforced by a different setting: the isolated social situation characteristic of the Jewish novel of the 40's, the novel of intermarriage and anti-Semitism, in which a lone Jew is placed in a world of Gentiles. It is hardly necessary to list the books to which I refer. Their dominant emotion is fear, their context a cold, menacing world without Jews, in which one's life is determined—more accurately, ruined—by being a Jew. In the warmer, almost hothouse atmosphere of the earlier novels of American Jewish life, there was evident—to ignore their more positive emotions—bitterness, anger, sarcasm—but rarely, as I have said, an undiluted hatred, and not at all, I think, fear.

Even with rather ordinary gifts, writers using such an approach could utilize the common experience of group life to evoke a strong emotional response; Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money*, for that reason, is still moving. But Katkov's fury exists in a vacuum; the Jews are not there—nor are the capitalists, the fascists, the smug middle class, or any other substitute. He is too blinded by his fury and his guilt to justify their absence by seeing the causes or origins of his own condition, and all he can do is multiply meaningless anti-Semitic incidents to justify his fear of the Gentiles, and equally meaningless accounts of the fury of Jewish mothers to justify his incapacity to deal with his problem. Had he any understanding of himself, neither of these two foci of his interest would appear crucial.

I am not denying that there is anti-Semitism, or that such Jewish mothers as Katkov describes exist, but these are only part of the problem he sets himself—intermarriage and Jewish-Gentile relations. These permit glib explanations and rationalizations, but do not form the problem's most significant context. This is to be found, rather, in the life of the second generation of Jews, who stand in an ambiguous and ambivalent relationship to the old Jewish ways and to "American" life, and whose adjustments are complicated by the involvement of anti-Semitism in all their problems. (It is simply not true that anti-Semitism slaps them openly in the face and poisons their existence.) The wild rejection of the past and the passionate embracing of American ways that so well served our novelists in the past—and which we were willing to accept because they were combined with the portrayal of a rich existence—appear totally inadequate.

Katkov's novel illuminates neither the newer problem nor the older ones. Everything is served up in the standard hash of tough talk, sex, extravagance. His hero, a hysteric fighting shadows, awakens neither sympathy nor understanding.

British Poet in America

The Age of Anxiety. By W. H. Auden. Random House, 1947. 138 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by John Berryman

As a large and ambitious production by one of the best living poets, *The Age of Anxiety* is disappointing. The four vaguest characters in modern literature (Quant, a shipping clerk and widower; Malin, a medical intelligence officer in the RCAF; Emble, a young mid-Western naval officer; Rosetta, a department-store buyer) sit around one evening during the recent war, first in a Third Avenue bar, then in Rosetta's apartment, and mull things over: the modern soul, the seven ages of man's life, the seven stages of some dream-quest, the possibilities of happiness, the alienations of men, the ennuis of America. They think, then they talk; in the cab they sing a dirge; Emble and Rosetta make vague love, Emble passes out; Quant sings, Malin thinks, on their way home. As in some recent novels but for no reason that appears sufficient, it is All Souls', and everything goes, all the tangle of current intellectual equipment. The numerous subjects are dim and confused, the styles are nerveless and self-indulgent, anything comes up anywhere and nothing happens to it. The occasional prose seems more thoughtful, really, and more natural than the verse, though the verse is sporadically "brilliant" and there are good lines and passages.

The general effect is that of a parody of Auden by somebody very pretentious and uncertain, but so gifted that it can only be Auden himself. The whole tone, anyway, apocalyptic or skittish or heavy-avuncular, is Auden's; the other characters speak for him as steadily as Quant. There can be no doubt that he wrote the entire poem, and:

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In the high heavens,
The ageless places,
The gods are wringing their great worn hands.

Auden's present subject, actually, and his failure with it as semi-dramatic, were predicted by Randall Jarrell several years ago when he wrote in *Partisan Review*: "What we are most anxious about is our anxiety itself: the greatest of all sins, Auden learns from Kafka, is impatience—and he decides that the hero 'is, in fact, one who is not anxious.' But it was inevitable that Auden should arrive at this point. His anxiety is fundamental; and the one thing that anxiety cannot do is to accept itself, to do nothing about itself—consequently it admires more than anything else in the world doing nothing, sitting still, waiting." The attitude goes far back in Auden, though not to his earliest work; it can be seen developing in an ambivalent sonnet from *Look, Stranger,* now called "Who's Who," about a T. E. Lawrence sort of hero whose ambition and energy are in effect condemned by comparison with the self-effacement and indolence of one he loves, who

could whistle; would sit still
Or potter around the garden; answered some
Of his long marvelous letters but kept none.

"The guilt and grime of a great career," he comments now, and

the caring poet,
Child of his chamber, chooses rightly
His pleased pictures of pure solitudes
Where gusts gamble over gaunt areas
Frozen and futile but far enough. . . .

(So Rosetta, but it might be any of them, and whether "gamble" is a misprint cannot be determined in a style riddled with lazy puns—as on pages 93-4 a speech seems to be mis-assigned, but which, and whose, it is impossible to tell.) It is an unfortunate attitude for the writing of things even so tentatively dramatic as conversation-pastorals, much less plays, and helps explain Auden's remarkable indifference to characterization.

I say "conversation-pastorals" because the book is subtitled "A Baroque Pastoral," though —for reasons requiring too much space to set out—I hardly think it *is* a pastoral, whether in Greg's senses or Empson's, or indeed anybody's except several other contemporary poets who use the words "pastoral" and "eclogue" as if they had no content. How far it is baroque is a question that would repay investigation only if the poem were better and clearer and somewhat unified; actualism is frequent, certainly, and distortion is constant—the first "conversation" (p. 17) at the first reading freezes the reader's hope that in spite of what has happened and not happened already the poem may yet prove good. The versification is interesting, based mostly on a trochaic dimeter (4-stress), alliterative, unrhymed, with caesura and much substitution; more interesting, if my ear is right, than satisfying.

But a more depressing reason for the poem's degree of failure is that its author is dealing with a life he does not seem to understand, American life. He does the best he can, taking as characters a Jewish immigrant woman, a Canadian (perhaps), and an Irishman-born, along with one native; but there is little, I'm afraid, either representative or individual about them *in their situations,* which are American. Their language is hybrid, and uncertain. Nothing in the poem seems real except the poet's uneasiness. "The less I feel/The more I mind." The informality and vulgarity which impress Europeans in American life make them feel, often, that it will be easy to understand this life, or even that there is nothing to understand, but I wonder whether it is not in fact much more difficult to seize for imagination, and even for practice, than the more coherent and complex life of a European country. Compare the sensitive English and insensitive American passages in *New York Letter* (Part III)—a work written soon after Auden came to this country but closely paralleled by inequalities in the present work. One has made out in Auden's verse for years a thoughtless and headlong attempt to Americanize himself, and it has produced something easier to feel undesirable than to describe, a literary effect resembling the excessive though uncomprehending appreciation with which one has seen cultured Europeans trying to initiate themselves into the philistine mysteries of the *New Yorker* magazine. There is something heartbreaking in this, but also something so overconfident and ill-advised that one observes it with wonder.

Perhaps *The Age of Anxiety* will not matter more, when it comes to occupy thirty double-column pages in Auden's final Collected Poems, than do some of the efforts of Wordsworth or

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Tennyson hidden in their thousand pages. Such a recent lyric as "The Fall of Rome" shows him wonderful still, and instead of lamenting the present book one feels inclined simply to thank him again for years of excitement and delight, bow awkwardly to his American phase so far, and wish him luck. At the same time, Auden appears to have been struggling less and less successfully with a peculiar tastelessness, which is able to produce (for the *New Yorker,* of course) merciless trash like "The Glamour Boys and Girls Have Grievances Too," and which leads him to caption the second of his great poems on the Dioscuri (the first was "The Witnesses") "Not All the Candidates Pass" in the *Collected Poetry.* This is a different matter from his anxiety to disclaim and discredit his early work (so that III in *Poems* is later fantastically entitled "Venus Will Now Say a Few Words"); but both are allied with what Delmore Schwartz calls the "tourist slanginess" which is infecting his whole style and is especially malignant in this new poem. The artificial race lament, given to Rosetta when at the end Auden suddenly remembers why he made her Jewish (a character that scarcely appears in her through a hundred pages), makes one gloomier still. It is hard to be much more optimistic about the work to come, just at the moment, than the magnificent and uneasy poet probably is himself.

The Universe of Terror

TEUFEL UND VERDAMMTE. By BENEDIKT KAUTSKY. Zurich, Buechergilde Gutenberg, 1946. 328 pp. $4.00.

DER SS-STAAT. By EUGEN KOGON. Stockholm, Bermann-Fischer, 1947. 434 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by ALFRED WERNER

THERE were already more than a hundred concentration camps in Germany before the war and their number increased rapidly as the Wehrmacht conquered one country after another. Two trained Austrian sociologists who each spent seven years in various KL's (*Konzentrationslager*), most of the time at Buchenwald, have now given us a composite and truly analytical picture of the KL as a social and political phenomenon.

The concentration camp was a world with its own laws and logic, mind and motives. For Messrs. Kautsky and Kogon the KL is neither the product simply of a sex maniac's perverted brain nor a typical result of German *Schrecklichkeit;* it is the logical and inevitable, the obvious and final, the frankest and most brutal expression of the authoritarian order. For Kogon, who abhorred National Socialism from the standpoint of a sincere Catholic, Buchenwald was the inevitable fruit of a society that had abandoned the moral principles of Christianity and embraced nihilism. For the Marxist Kautsky, it was the horrible last stage in the development of capitalist society, the dire prophecies of the *Communist Manifesto* come true.

"A KL," writes Kautsky, "was in reality a world of its own, full of contrasts and abysses, with a hierarchy which, though not stable, could be ascertained at any moment, a hierarchy in which every individual had his rank. He could rise or fall, according to his ability and his fate, but at any given moment he had to occupy his own place and respect the positions of the others. If he desired to improve his status, he had to fight—but only the strongest were capable of fighting. The weak were condemned to remain on the bottom, helplessly waiting for the moment when they would be unfit for anything but the crematoria. But everyone who could fight did fight—for a better job, for some morsel of food, a better bed, a less tattered blanket, a piece of soap, an untorn shirt. It was a fight of all against all, an unending turmoil in an ant-hill—and yet the saying *'Plus ça change, plus ça reste la même chose'* could be applied here. For if someone gained something, the other fellow lost something through that gain, and as a consequence of these fights the common cake became smaller rather than bigger."

A concentration camp consisted of two realms that had, alas, many contacts but otherwise remained separate from each other: the SS super-structure on top, and the community of prisoners below. The SS acted as legislators and judges, but the actual administration of their laws and decisions was handed over to the prisoners themselves; partly because the SS were too lazy or too stupid, partly because limited powers granted to a clique of prisoners served to demoralize the whole prison community. Thus the camps were ruled according to that time-honored adage: divide and conquer. Contrary to common belief, the ordinary prisoner saw the SS-man only rarely—only when one

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of the black sadists desired to mete out punishment personally.

KAUTSKY devotes most of his space to analyzing the structure of this "republic of prisoners." Was it actually a mirror of capitalistic society in decay, as Kautsky seems to imply? Or wasn't it rather an atavism, a return to the Stone Age, in the terms of Hobbes' *Leviathan:* where all desires were dictated by motives of self-preservation, and there arose a war of all against all in which force and fraud became the two cardinal virtues?

The KL society had as its top layers the *Lageraelteste* (senior trusties) and the *Kapos* (leaders of the working squads), who, though prisoners themselves, established a terror regime second in cruelty only to that of their jailers, the SS. A step below them were the *Stubendienst* (room trusties), cooks, barbers and other workers in privileged positions, who used their privileges at the expense of their fellow-slaves. There was finally the great gray mass of ordinary prisoners, but even these were divided into two categories: the strong and the weak, the latter being treated by the former in accordance, as it were, with Nietzsche's maxim: *"Was faellt, soll man stossen* (kick anything that's fallen down)." An almost indescribable gap, says Kautsky, separated the doomed little man of Auschwitz-Buna, a candidate for the crematoria, from the well-fed, well-clothed senior trusty who lived the life of Riley by sharing loot from the murdered Jews with the SS.

There were still other distinctions. A German prisoner was above one from any of the Allied countries; however, these latter enjoyed far greater freedom than Polish and Russian prisoners of war. The real pariahs without any rights whatsoever were the Jews and the Gypsies. Finally, there was a distinction, operating only among the German inmates, between the political prisoners (called the "Reds" because they wore red triangles on their clothes, although they included individuals from all parties, from Communists to recalcitrant Nazis), and the professional criminals (the "Greens").

The main struggle developed between the Reds and the Greens, for, though the SS had originally entrusted all major positions to the latter, the Reds, dominated by the Communists, tried—often successfully—to wrest them away. The Social Democrat Kautsky and the anti-Marxist Kogon agree that the Communists, who constituted the most active group among the Reds, proved to be efficient administrators who eliminated some of the excesses of corruption, and endeavored to save political prisoners at the expense of criminals; but both also charge the Communists with having time and again sold out to the enemy political prisoners of non-Communist persuasion.

KAUTSKY's remarks on the Jews he came across form the least convincing chapter in his book. Himself a Jew (according to the Nuremberg Laws), he seems affected by Jewish self-hatred. Not only does he condemn both Zionism and Jewish Orthodoxy, he also complains that the Jews created anti-Semitism among the leftist workers by resorting to bribery and by failing to see the "positive" aspect of their imprisonment. But was it not logical that the Jews, who fared much worse than the Gentiles and knew what fate held in store for them, should try their utmost—as a rule, unsuccessfully—to escape the death factory? And while a labor leader who had opposed Hitler could feel himself a martyr for his political ideals, why should an ordinary non-political man, imprisoned simply because he had been born a Jew, find any but negative aspects in his captivity? How could he see it as anything other than an unhappy accident?

Curiously, the lessons Kautsky learned in the concentration camp did not make him emerge a more orthodox Marxist than he was before. Despite the flag-waving and editorializing at the very end of his book, he does conclude that man is bound to be bad when vested with unquestioned power, that power is evil in itself, whoever may hold it, and that any dictatorship is deplorable. Summing up, he declares: "The KL became a university where egotism was taught. Some of the more intelligent inmates saw and learned a great deal in the camp; they became shrewder—but no one became better. . . . No one of us survivors is entirely free of guilt."

EUGEN KOGON, on the other hand, shows an insight into the mechanisms of our society such as one would not have expected from a former admirer of Othmar Spann—that Viennese ideologist of romantic reaction—and an editor of the Austrian clerical-fascist *Schoenere Zukunft.* Kogon is mainly interested in analyzing the nature and functioning of the SS. For Himmler's Schutz-Staffeln, or SS, formed the core of the

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Third Reich; they were for the ruling Nazi clique what the Praetorian Guards had been for the Roman emperors.

The SS were recruited from social misfits on the border-line of professional criminality, and the concentration camps were created as much for their benefit as for the Reich's protection against "subversive" elements. Consisting before the war of fewer than a quarter-million hand-picked individuals, healthy, brutal, and blindly obedient, their number increased as Hitler's territory widened.

To maintain them as the powerful arm, the weapon of last resort, upon which the Third Reich could count in time of emergency, they had to be kept both satisfied and efficient. Millions of slaves, including some of Europe's best artists and artisans, built beautifully furnished villas for them and their families outside the KL's; and the luxury and orgies in which they indulged remind one of the mad Roman emperors (the wife of one KL commander, a former stenotypist, took her baths in champagne only). To whip up their fighting spirit and to teach them how to treat inferior races in the countries conquered by Hitler, the SS were encouraged to maltreat their prisoners and show them no mercy.

The SS did their task "splendidly": of the eight million people (according to Kogon; whereas Kautsky's estimate is nine to ten million) who spent some time in a KL, only half a million now survive—and half of these survivors were released by the Nazis themselves. At the same time the SS terror kept even the millions outside the barbed wire paralyzed; for though the SS did not care for publicity about the internal details of their camps (these became known, nevertheless), they could not, and probably did not wish to, prevent the term *Konzentrationslager* from becoming a symbol of dread all over Europe.

Despite the SS terror, Kogon believes, the German nation could and should have offered some resistance. The Germans, however, had been trained long before Hitler, not only to obey authority, but also to believe whatever authority proclaimed. Hence, the average German was inclined to consider *all* KL inmates common criminals—until he himself or somebody he loved was arrested by the Gestapo. Whereas in Czechoslovakia the inhabitants of any village through which prisoners of the Nazis were taken would try to help the unhappy ones as much as possible, German nurses refused even a drink of water to KL prisoners engaged in removing debris at Weimar after an air bombardment, and the local hospital would not administer first aid to those of them who were injured. Kogon tells a story of a German Red Cross nurse who long after V-E Day refused to give help to sick ex-inmates of Buchenwald, indignant at the thought that she should care for "tuberculous criminals." The Germans (though not the Germans alone) are definitely to be blamed for having tolerated such hells on earth as the KL's, and Germany, Kogon asserts, cannot become a decent land again before having atoned for her crimes.

BOTH *Teufel und Verdammte* and *Der SS-Staat* are soberly written and well documented. Despite their different backgrounds, the authors reach the same conclusion: namely, that the KL was not a puzzling accident, but a logical product of fascist society, and a phenomenon bound to recur unless all fascist tendencies are eradicated. It is at this point that the ways of Kautsky and Kogon part; for while the former sees the remedy in the international solidarity of all anti-fascist workers, the KL constitutes for the pious Christian Kogon an *Ecce Homo* showing man how far he can go astray without the divine truth which alone makes him free.

The Threshold of Emancipation

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By SOLOMON MAIMON. Edited, with an epilogue, by Moses Hadas. New York, Schocken Books, 1947. (Schocken Library, No. 5.) 116 pp. $1.50.

THE RABBI OF BACHERACH: A FRAGMENT. By HEINRICH HEINE. Translated by E. B. Ashton. With selections from Heine's letters and an epilogue by Erich Loewenthal. New York, Schocken Books, 1947. (Schocken Library, No. 4.) 93 pp. $1.50.

Reviewed by HEINZ POLITZER

SOLOMON MAIMON writes in his autobiography: "Had I been urged in that direction I would have become a great, though not an accurate painter, i.e., have been able to sketch the outlines of a picture easily, without having the patience to work out its minute details."

His career foundered, not on the difficulties

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the German Jews of the late 18th century met on their road to emancipation, but on obstacles inside himself. His contemporaries met him halfway on several occasions. Immanuel Kant accepted his book on transcendental philosophy as the work of a disciple. His autobiography so impressed cultivated readers that Goethe wanted to take its author into his personal circle. Moreover, around the work of Moses Mendelssohn there was forming a group of enlightened Jews who would have been well equipped to recognize and assist Maimon, however little he fitted the Mendelssohnian idea of a sage.

MAIMON was undone by accident, by the "malice of the insensate," by misunderstanding, by the vicissitudes of life, and by drink. But what really killed him was not circumstance, but inner discord.

When he came to Germany from Lithuania (from the chaos of a Polish Jewry that had just gone through the hell of Chmielnicki's pogroms and the Heidemak persecutions, and whose soul Hasidism—which left Maimon untouched—had begun to transform) he was already the head of a family. He left his family behind, feeling that he was not responsible to the actualities of life. He acknowledged only one authority: *truth*, for whose sake he was willing to run amuck.

Maimon's fanaticism, however, admitted of curb and reflection. He not only pursued truth doggedly, but he looked on at the chase—huntsman and quarry, spectator and critic, all in one. He was not only a thinker, but the mime of a thinker. He was not only honest to an almost intolerable degree, but at the same time a cynical mocker of all truth. He was not only meticulously modest, but also so vain that his modesty was like the grimace with which a man disfigured by nature consoles himself for the ugliness of his image in the mirror.

THE documents of Maimon's case can be found in his own history of his life. Some important fragments appeared in 1792 under the title "Fragments of Ben Josua's Autobiography," in a magazine of experimental psychology edited by Karl Philipp Moritz. Moritz wrote the following introduction: "This autobiography . . . will be of interest to all who want to understand how the intellectual faculty develops under the most difficult circumstances, and how the thirst for knowledge will overcome seemingly insuperable obstacles."

What raises Solomon Maimon's autobiography far above the didactic praise of Professor Moritz is its wholly disinterested contemplation of the author's own life as a matter worthy of study. Maimon's memoirs are much closer to Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* than to Goethe's *Werther*. Actually Maimon's prose is without echoes or models. It is determined neither by history nor by the precepts of religion. It acknowledges no other ethics than that which had led Maimon to philosophy as the great light of life. It knows no shame, and nothing of the veil spread over it by the spirit: artistic form.

The description he gives of his life is neither confession nor self-justification, but a bald, factual report. Severed from his tradition and never accepted, at best tolerated, by the culture for which he hankered, he was free from all conventions. In this roving rabbi, this beggar from conviction and pride, there burned an unquenchable thirst for truth that placed his amoral life under the law of a higher morality. Since it was he himself who accused himself, those depths of existence were opened to him that lead to contemplation. Since it was he himself who defended himself, he managed to see through all the evasions he took refuge in. And since, finally, it was he himself who pronounced judgment, he was able to cancel the truth, to which he was pledged and to which he had sacrificed his life, by a derisive laugh at mankind. His book is an essential contribution to the comedy of man face to face with himself.

To make the emancipation of the German Jews possible, Mendelssohn had undertaken to represent Judaism in his own respectable image. In this way, he had made himself *persona grata* with his hosts. Solomon Maimon, on the other hand, was an eternal *enfant perdu*, and his book attests to the eventual bankruptcy of all those efforts which had brought about a rapprochement between Mendelssohn and his time, between Germanism and Judaism in the 18th century.

A GENERATION later the Jews stepped over the threshold of emancipation. Heine's fragment of a novel, *The Rabbi of Bacherach* (projected in 1832, if not earlier), is no masterpiece, not even a truncated one. It was planned as a genre picture with dramatic highlights, to depict Jewish life in the late Middle Ages along the Rhine and in Spain: persecution and faith, tradition and conversion, venerable custom, ferment—all

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in casual juxtaposition, partly an evocation of mood, partly a prose ballad.

But here, too, as in Maimon's memoirs, the dispute between the author and his milieu emerges as the central theme behind the impressionist hodge-podge. Only, instead of the quest for truth, we find the quest for expediency, instead of the laugh of derision a casual irony. The narrative of the *Rabbi* is as subjective as Maimon's account of his own life. But the reporting, creating ego has lost weight, has become threadbare and wholly questionable. The seclusion of the ghetto from which Maimon came had preserved in him the seriousness and intensity of the Middle Ages. With Heine we are entirely in the modern era. The human personality is about to dissolve, to disguise itself and hide behind wings and décor; in Maimon it is still undissembled.

But the claim made by the milieu on the individual had also weakened. The walls of the ghetto had fallen, not only because the spirit of the new era had broken through them, but because the old order, which they represented, had begun to crack of its own accord. Belief in human responsibility had lost its intensity. The era of emancipation was over, the era of assimilation was beginning.

Vol. 49

American Jewish Year Book. Volume 49 (5708) 1947-1948. Prepared by the American Jewish Committee: Harry Schneiderman, Morris Fine, Maurice Spector, Maurice Basseches. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947. 844 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by Oscar Handlin

The forty-ninth annual edition of the American Jewish Year Book appears in much its usual form. For almost a half-century, this useful handbook has kept a record of developments in the Jewish communities of the United States and of the world. By now, it includes not much less than a thousand pages of data. Presented in a compact and attractive form, it makes an immediate reference tool of great utility for librarians, for public officials, and for all those who deal with Jewish problems; and ultimately it will serve historians as a welcome guide to scattered and inaccessible materials.

The work embodies some of the aspects of the traditional almanac. It contains a calendar of the Jewish year, a mélange of statistics, a directory of Jewish national organizations and of federations and welfare funds, and various lists of special events, honors, and offices held by prominent Jews.

There are, in addition, six special articles. Four of these, memorial biographies of notable individuals who died in the past year, are not much more informative than newspaper obituaries. This should not surprise us; such occasional biographies, written with no matter how much restraint, inevitably partake more of the nature of eulogy than of appraisal. Their inclusion is traditional with the Year Book; but one wonders whether this is not an institutional tradition that the Year Book has outgrown—as, to its benefit and ours, it has outgrown so many others.

Nathan Schachner's essay, "Church, State and Education," on the other hand, is an enlightening summary of the historical background of a problem that daily becomes more difficult in the United States.

The heart of the volume, however, is a five hundred-page review of the year, a careful resumé of the significant occurrences in Jewish life in the United States and, country by country, abroad. As Salo Baron's summary indicates, the dominant problems this year everywhere were still those left in the aftermath of war: Zionism, relief, and resettlement. The magnitude of the tasks and the extent of the achievements in each field are impressively set forth in the thirty-seven articles of this section. Particularly noteworthy are the discussions, for the United States, of communal welfare by H. L. Lurie, of cultural activities by Moshe Starkman, and of overseas aid by Nathan Reich; and the accounts of England by Joseph Leftwich, of the Netherlands by David L. Schorr, and of Germany by Boris Sapir.

I would make two suggestions for the improvement of this generally admirable section. To begin with, more rigorous editing and more frequent cross references would eliminate a needless degree of repetition. There is, for example, a good deal of overlapping in the three discussions of Palestine, under the headings of "Zionist Activities in the United States," "Palestine," and "The Palestine Problem." Similarly, the attitude of Jewish groups toward released time for religious education in the public schools is

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handled in four different places. In this connection, too, an index, at least to the review of the year section, would be very helpful.

The other criticism is more fundamental. There is a tendency to treat as Jewish activities only those that are confined to specifically Jewish circles and that deal with narrowly Jewish subjects. At certain points, this bias limits the discussion entirely to the pathological aspects of Jewish life; the article on Latin America, for instance, gives the impression that the Jews of that part of the world have no interest but anti-Semitism and no activity but resisting anti-Semitism.

More generally, the same inclination distorts the perspective of the total picture of Jewish life in the United States. Moshe Starkman's review of cultural activities is excellent as far as it goes; but the reader would not know from it that American Jews were engaged in significant writing in English as well as in Hebrew and in Yiddish. And those familiar with the part of Jews in the American theater will find it a little disconcerting to discover at the end of the section on the theater, which deals entirely with Yiddish and Hebrew performances, the comment that "there is no organized Anglo-Jewish theater."

This deficiency strikes me as important because it gives a one-sided view of the role of the Jews in American development. For better or for worse, many—perhaps most—Jewish achievements in this country have not come within a specifically Jewish context. And the record that neglects this aspect of Jewish life cannot be complete.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

NATHAN GLAZER, assistant editor of COMMENTARY, is now on leave of absence at Yale University, taking part in a research project for the study of American political attitudes.

JOHN BERRYMAN, poet and critic, has written for *Partisan Review, Kenyon Review,* and various other periodicals. A volume of his poetry will be published this spring under the title *The Dispossessed.*

ALFRED WERNER is associate editor of the *Chicago Jewish Forum,* and has contributed to the *Nation,* the *Saturday Review of Literature,* the *New York Times Book Review,* and various other periodicals. He wrote "The Junker Plot to Kill Hitler" in the July 1947 COMMENTARY.

HEINZ POLITZER recently came to this country from Palestine and is now on the staff of the Manumit School in Bristol, Pennsylvania. He wrote the article "The World of Saul Steinberg," which was published in the October 1947 COMMENTARY.

OSCAR HANDLIN is assistant professor of social sciences and a member of the department of history and social relations at Harvard. He wrote the article "Our Unknown American Jewish Ancestors," which appeared in the February COMMENTARY.

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